THE WORKS OF MRS. COWLEY.

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OF

MRS. COWLEY.

DRAMAS AND POEMS.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

DRAMAS.

LONDON.

PUBLISHED BY WILKIE AND ROBINSON, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

Printed by T. DAVISON, *Whitefriars.*

1813.

PREFACE.

Dramatic writings are a constant resource both in Society and in the Closet—no where have they been the mere fashion of a day. The liveliness and hilarity of Comedy is a refuge from care, where care is light, and the woes that yield not to a Laugh, oft are guiled away in the stream of gentle Pity, for the woes of others, which the TRAGIC MUSE *delights to infuse, until real grief, checked in its current, yields to the Fortitude she loves to inculcate.*

The Mind is rectified by the knowledge of the World dramatic compositions convey; and they glide improvement into the Heart, by a skilful arrangement of Facts, from which, whatever may have been the characters and thoughts necessarily introduced, the result is—a feeling of disgust for the vices, and of respect for the virtues, with which Nature has tenanted the heart of man. Enforced, not by Precepts dry and uninteresting, but by leading the Auditor to form Conclusions for himself, and to abide by them with all the attachment we feel to our native thoughts. Faint is the rhetoric that

imperiously dictates change in the heart, compared with that which leads the addressed to think for himself the thoughts of the Writer.

The Public are now, for the first time, presented with a Collection of the Works of the late Mrs. Cowley; *and in the third volume the publishers have included several Poems now for the first time printed.*

She was the daughter of Mr. Philip Parkhouse of Tiverton in Devonshire, who was educated for Holy Orders, and with that view went through the celebrated School of that town. A loss in the family deprived him of certainty of provision in the Church, and with a mere Chance he was not content; he therefore desisted from his first intention, and became a Bookseller, as the nearest approach he could then prudently make to a life of some degree of literary enjoyment. Upon having in middle life reason to think that he would have been provided for in the Church, it was his custom to say, alluding to her whose works are before the reader,—I feel no Regret! I should have been thrown into a different part of the world and connections, and should not have had my Daughter! He was a Member of the Corporation of the Town, and was very highly respected in his neighbourhood as a man of great Talents and Probity, and a thorough Scholar.

He was old enough to have witnessed the close of that Æra which might be denominated the Reign of Literature in England, and was himself a man of Genius partaking the enthusiasm of his time, and awake with the utmost sensibility to literary distinction. He was

not very distantly related to the Poet GAY, *who records, it will be recollected, his visit to his relations in Devonshire, in his* JOURNEY TO EXETER *inscribed to the Earl of Burlington.*

The excellence of his Daughter was the delight and pride of his heart to the last hour of his life, which continued to near the close of her literary career, and she, in return, felt for him the most intense filial affection. An affection that spoke throughout her first Poem—THE MAID OF ARRAGON; *a sweetly pleasing Tale of filial piety, in the Dedication of which she tells him*

> *The Tale to you, to you the Bayes belong,*
> *You gave my youthful Fancy wings to soar,*
> *From your indulgence flows my wild-note song.*
> *Vol. 3. p. 7.*

Mrs. Cowley was born in Tiverton in 1743. *In such a Father's society she caught that lively tone of classical illustration which at times displays itself in her works, and has sometimes led to a mistaken belief that she was, what of all women she would have disliked to be—a Learned Lady! the character held up by her to ridicule in her first Comedy—The Runaway.*

She was about twenty-five years of age when she was married to Mr. Cowley, a man of very considerable talents. Their family consisted of four children; some very beautiful lines will be found in the third volume inscribed by her to the memory of their eldest daughter, who died early in life. That Daughter she survived twenty years, but never survived her grief for

her loss. Mr. Cowley died in 1797, a Captain in the East India Company's service. It was when he was with his Regiment in India that she dedicated her Comedy of MORE WAYS THAN ONE *to him, in the beautiful Poem prefixed to it. It is to this Gentleman's Brother that* THE FATE OF SPARTA *will be found dedicated with so much elegance and feeling.*

In the year 1776, some years after her Marriage, a sense of mental power for dramatic writing suddenly struck her whilst sitting with her Husband at the Theatre.——So delighted with this? said she to him —why I could write as well myself! His laugh, without notice, was answered in the course of the following morning by sketching the first Act of THE RUNAWAY, *and, though she had never before written a literary line, the Play was finished with the utmost celerity Many will recollect the extraordinary success with which it was brought out. It established the Author's Name at once, and caused incessant applications to her to continue to write.*

This Comedy was followed by WHO'S THE DUPE. *In which the keeping of a downright Farce is preserved distinct in species from the elegant Vivacity and Satire of Comedy. After a lively correspondence with her Father for Greek to laugh at, written in the Roman Character, she obtained the lines with which she plays so humorously.*

She now dared a loftier flight, and her Tragedy ALBINA *was produced. In the elegant Liveliness of Comedy, the Humour of Farce, and the thwarted*

Passions and lofty grandeur of Tragedy, she thus dared the whole range of the Drama, before she made a second attempt in any particular department of it. And still delayed, until, to make herself mistress of the extent of her powers, she had taken up the Poet's Lyre and composed her Poem THE MAID OF ARRAGON—*in which the reader will not find her inferior to herself.*

The passion for the Drama was then as steady as that for Poetry is at present. She recurred to it, and in the course of the same year, 1780, *produced* THE BELLE'S STRATAGEM, *by Permission dedicated to the Queen. Thenceforward she wrote the other Dramas which these volumes contain.*

Any information deemed a useful preparative to the perusal of any particular play will be introduced, where it will be most serviceable, in a Note prefixed to it.

They will be found arranged in the Order in which they were written. Thus the only part of the history of an Author, in which in general the public take an interest, the history of the progress of the writer's Mind, is at once obtained. The contrary course, of arranging by Classes, denies to the reader the relief, in Variety, which even the Author required!

The different departments of the Drama, Tragedy Comedy and Farce, were kept quite distinct in her mind. The Comedie Larmoyante *is never found amongst her works; her Tragedies vouch that this was not from inability to touch the Passions. As free are*

her Tragedies from the intrusion of the Comic Muse, as is her THALIA *from losing her Spirits and shedding tears.* WHO'S THE DUPE *is the only instance in which she descended to Farce, but, with the utmost flow of Humour, she will be found to have by no means sunk herself with her Subject; her mind is always perceived paramount to the vulgarity or the folly she is describing. Still, she as correctly writes Farce, as before she wrote Comedy, and afterwards wrote Tragedy, is equally at home, as each in its due turn may be requisite, in the humorous, the pathetic, the witty, and the sublime. There is one instance, at the close of her dramatic writings, in which, for variety, she professes to write a mixed Drama*—A DAY IN TURKEY.

The reader's expectation that she should excel in delineating Females will not be disappointed. Indeed one of the circumstances in which her Dramas differ from the more modern plays is—that Women are generally made the Leading Characters. Her favorite idea of female character is—a combination of the purest innocence of Conduct with the greatest vivacity of Manners, in the mind of a woman who, like Lady Bell Bloomer in WHICH IS THE MAN *(V. 1. p. 337)*—"*is mistress of her whole situation, and cannot be surprised.*" *Every female performer who deems herself capable of personating a Gentlewoman will at times have recourse to her Works.*

Nor will her pencil be found to fail in her portraits of the other sex. With no weak one are drawn, the Pedant GRADUS, *the lofty Westmoreland, the im-*

petuous Gondibert, the elegant Doricourt, the Trifler Flutter, the assuming clown Pendragon, the musical Vincentio, the literary upstart Sir Marvell Mushroom, and the weak mind, vain of office, of Sir Robert Floyer. Her idea of the character of an English Gentleman is best described by herself in Vol. 3. p. 358.

Modern Writers in general cannot be said to fail in their attempts to bring Gentlemen and Gentlewomen on the Stage—they dont attempt it. There seems to be an inclination but to paint from lower life. But Mrs. Cowley constantly keeps up the elegance of Style which Comedy, as distinct from Farce, should preserve. In her plays Posterity may perhaps find as complete specimens as will reach them, of english Colloquy towards the close of the eighteenth Century, and of Manners as characteristic of the day, as the style of the elder Dramatists is of their's.

Characters of coarse and peculiar outline she appears seldom to have attempted—

When lines are bold and strong, a vulgar pen
The sketch may take; it asks no mighty skill
Misers to paint, or mad, or wayward men.
V. 3. p. 108.

The Mirror held up to nature, amidst the settled manners of the present day, abounds not with peculiar character; to introduce much of it therefore is to give an air of Improbability. Her Characters seem actual copies from Life, and that may be pronounced of them all in general, which Davies in his LIFE OF GARRICK

says of the Characters in The Belle's Stratagem—they are true Sons and Daughters of Adam. She was accustomed to say that she always succeeded best when she did not herself know what she was going to do, and suffered the events, and even the plot, to grow under her pen. It is this that has so often given an air of real Nature to her Works. In one instance however a portion of one of the plots of a Comedy (The School For Greybeards) was taken from an old Play. It was extracted and prepared for her, she knew not whence it came, nor ever saw the original. Her plots, except in this instance, had their origin only in her own mind.

Though her Characters were not written for particular Performers in general, yet it has been thought right to give with each play the original Dramatis Personæ.

We proceed now to another branch of Literature. Her mental powers found not their limit in the composition of these eleven Dramas all of them successful —the claim of her Name to celebrity has greater breadth of foundation. The Volume of her Poems proves that she was mistress of every Measure of Poetry, as well as of every department of the Drama.

They, like her Plays, are arranged in the order in which they were composed, with one exception—the ADDRESS *prefixed to them. Its prefatory character designated its appropriate station in the Work. The Dramas and the Poems, with the exception of* THE MAID OF ARRAGON, *were chronologically distinct enough to fall naturally into separate Classes. The*

more beautiful passages in her larger poems are pointed out in the "CONTENTS" *prefixed to each.*

In The Maid Of Arragon she first ventured on poetic flight. It is one moving Picture throughout. Its Blank Verse is carried on in a sweetly pleasing tone accordant to the subject, and in a Measure which is certainly not of that species which Johnson denominates —crippled Prose; she never indulges in that extreme variation from the Measure adopted—that causes none to be perceptible. The Subject is Spain under the Invasion of the Moors; it seems a prophetic description of Spain under the usurpation of the French.

In THE SCOTTISH VILLAGE *she has viewed, with the Philosopher's and the Theologian's eye, the Vices and Virtues of civilized life. Opposing, to an enumeration of the ills consequent on population, the advantages of busy literary and cultivated Society.*

In EDWINA THE HUNTRESS, *a Poem full of beautiful description, the Manners and Amusements of* Days of Old *are described. The Eulogium on Marriage, and the description of Paradise, will not escape the reader, nor the Miltonic picture of Satan viewing it without a pang until—*

Fierce Rancour seized the Demon's breast,
When, in the MARRIED PAIR, *he felt mankind were blest!*
Vol. 3. p. 175.

In THE SIEGE OF ACRE *she dares a loftier Theme. Though more of Mind was requisite to compose this Poem, the Subject touches less the dearest feelings of*

the Heart than the scenes of Domestic Life on which, in her other poems, she delights to dwell, she has therefore engrafted into it, besides domestic scenes amongst the Christians of Syria, the lively Episode of Osmyn and Ira. *Itself a complete little Poem, in which are related the adventures of a Bride, going with her True-love to the Wars in the romantic spirit of the Asiatic Character.*

In Emigration, *a picture is drawn of the future progress of christian knowledge and of general Improvement in South America, in consequence of a Royal Family from Europe, the house of Braganza, being transferred thither.*

Besides these a considerable number of shorter poems will be found, many of which were never before published. Other rapid sketches were immediately thrown aside, or deemed worthy but to live for a day as Newspaper poetry too careless to merit preservation; or parts, that were not so, were borrowed from more finished poems included in her collection.

Her plays and poems constituted the whole of her Works, with only one exception, the Tale in Prose which will be found at the end of the third Volume.

As the Reader of her Works may feel some curiosity on the subject, information has been sought concerning her habits of composition. Catching up her pen immediately as the thought occurred to her, she always proceeded with the utmost facility and celerity. Most of her smaller poems were written without rising from the chair in which the thought struck her. Her pen

and paper were so immediately out of sight again, that those around her could scarcely tell when it was she wrote.

She was always much pleased with the description of Michael Angelo making the marble fly around him, as he was chiseling with the utmost swiftness, that he might shape, however roughly, his whole design in unity with one clear conception. If she found she could not proceed swiftly, she gave up what she had undertaken. Many were the instances in which she was known to compose quicker than a careful Amanuensis could copy.

Her Verses were framed by the ear. She did not scan as she proceeded, and indeed seldom at all. The contrary practice probably produces the regular dulness of the poems of the many; where the thoughts proceeding in trammels, the Judgment that corrects—stifles at the instant the Genius that should create. In such a current of mind did she compose, that with the change of Subject her Measure would change imperceptibly to herself; she points out an instance of it in —EMIGRATION, *which, as she did not prepare the Poem for publication, remains uncorrected.*

The task of finishing was little consonant with her Vivacity, and her works were sometimes laid open to the Public—before the extraneous matter after HER *first chiseling was cleared away.*

Authors, whose Works have endured, have probably always been regardless of immediate Finish. That such works have reached us must have depended upon their being retouched when Genius, having first had

unshackled sway, reposed and gave way, whilst Judgment, dilatory and cool, in duller steadiness of thought, applied its rule and its compass.

Those around Mrs. Cowley perceived, with Surprise, that she never seemed to hold Literature in much esteem. Her Conversation was never literary. She was no storer up of her Letters. She disliked literary Correspondence; if she found herself accidentally entangled in it, she instantly retired. The constant reference to, and examination of what had *been done was to her disagreeably retrograde. Native thought always pressed upon her, Invention was the natural habit of her mind.*

From enquiry in her family it appears that none recollect her to have read the play or the poem of another, the little she read consisted chiefly of Travels. She was equally regardless of her own Works. If parts of them were cited in her presence she never recognized them.

Though, in common life, her Memory appeared to be slight—yet her reader finds that she always abounds with the illustration she wants! To those around all seemed suddenly to burst in upon her, and her description of The Poet, in the Address *prefixed to the Volume of her poetry, to be truth with relation to herself—*

> *All information is his own*
> *Of what belongs to either zone,*
> *Not by laborious tasks acquired,*
> *Or by attention, strain'd and tired,*

Ah no! his intellectual glance
Pervades Creation's mystic dance,
What others gain by Study hard,
Flows in, upon the musing Bard,
A Word, the slightest hint will do
To bring all knowledge in review.
Calm and unmoved his mind may seem
Emitting scarcely forth a gleam,
Chance but a casual spark to stir,
The brightest flashes quick occur,
All is instant fulgent Light
Pouring on his mental sight!

V. 3, p. 1.

Neither before nor after she wrote did she take pleasure in viewing, nor was accustomed to be present at, a theatrical representation. She never witnessed a first performance of one of her own plays. Successive years elapsed without her being at a Theatre once. Though her writings gave public celebrity to her Name, her mind always retreated to the shades of private life.

That she looked from the path of Fame to domestic life is proved by the Dedications of several of her Works. Having previously in one shown her sense of the patronage of the Queen, and in another paid her tribute to the friendship with which Lord Harrowby had honoured different members of her family, a third is dedicated to her Father, a fourth to her Husband, and the dedication of the fifth is a tribute to the regard shown her by his Brother the Merchant.

Her Countenance was peculiarly animated, but her deportment was easy and unassuming, there was no-

thing in her Manners that indicated an AUTHOR. *In the liveliness of the Characters in her Dramas, she was pourtraying others not herself. The vivacity of her Plays is the more extraordinary from its being so little the habit of her own mind—that is more accurately conveyed in the pensiveness of* THE MAID OF ARRAGON. *She was rather fond of being alone, where the Muse*

> *Whose cheering influence makes lone hours so sweet,*
> *V. 3, p. 199.*

guiled Time away in Fancy's flow of thought. No pen can give so true a picture of her, as she gives of herself to her Husband, in the Dedication of her Comedy MORE WAYS THAN ONE.

She passed the greater portion of the year that preceded the french revolution in France, superintending the education of her Daughters, and formed there the idea of the Character of the young frenchman of that day—the A la Greque *of* A DAY IN TURKEY.

Her residence had been chiefly in London. As life advanced her mind recurred to her native place, having always wished to close her days amidst its rural beauties. She had constantly been the panegyrist of her native County Devon; a Poet's description of it will be found in her Preface to THE SCOTTISH VILLAGE, *and at the close of her* FIRE-SIDE TOUR. *To the place of her birth, she finally retired about eight years before her decease, as a pleasing and proper situation*

in which to pass the closing years of her life—amidst her early friends.

There Life wore away in placid happiness. Her amusive employment in her Garden, on the side of the river Exe there, will be found frequently described in the Vers de Societé *that form the latter portion of the third Volume, and are now for the first time printed. In them her mind will not be found weakening with the advance of Age; her prayer at the close of her* "DEPARTED YOUTH" *was granted to her, to the last she enjoyed*

The Mind to taste, the Nerve to feel!
V. 3, p. 112.

For several succeeding years she had neither published any thing, nor thought of her Works. The first burst of the revival of patriotic spirit in Spain, when Bishops advanced at the head of Troops, caused her mind to recur to her description, in THE MAID OF ARRAGON, *of a similar scene. She read the Poem with pleasure, her attention to her Works was revived, and the whole of them were again perused and retouched, the* non omnis moriar *of the Poet arose in her mind, and she felt a pleasing sense of delight in the idea of being the source of amusement after her departure.*

A life too lingering she had always wished to be spared. Never having been previously visited with a serious illness, during the last twelve months her health slowly declined, and she had a very strong presentiment of her quickening departure, looking forward to it with

a religious cheerfulness that can never have been surpassed.

She had, through life, without Cant, been really religious. Her first compositions were Prayers, some of which, written in youth, were many years preserved. Her fondness for composing them continued long. In Dramas appeals to the Deity are too frequently introduced, there she intruded them not. But she indulged her bias in her first poem, The Maid Of Arragon, where the Daughter commences and the Father closes with prayer.

About a Fortnight previous to her decease it was perceived that she was growing worse; but, as during her whole life, she withstood confinement and medicine. Even the day before her decease she struggled with her illness, and busied herself in planting Flowers. On the morning of Saturday the eleventh of March 1809 *she rose not from her bed—at eight in the evening she expired, in her sixty-seventh year, and in full possession of her mental powers. Her illness arose, as was pronounced by the Gentleman who was at length called in, from an affection of the liver, which had been gradually stealing upon her.*

Her pen traces no more—her Lute is for ever silent! Her Works are now for the first time collected. All the retouchings to be found amongst her Papers have been introduced gradually as they have been discovered.

On this Collection depends the future rank of her Name in the republic of Letters; it is tendered for the acceptance of the Public, if they will so receive it, as

an addition to the general stock of entertainment and literature.

An account of her habits and mode of writing has been given. Her Works are before the Reader to form his own Judgment. But, when he shall have perused the whole in their collected state, perhaps without rashness he may be asked (and until then the question is deferred) whether he has not found her Dramas abounding in sentiments always in unison with the english heart, heightened throughout by incessant sprightliness or strength of Dialogue, holding up vice to Laughter in her Comedies, in her Tragedies to Indignation—whether in her Poems he has not found Sensibility always awake, Description always vivid, a loftiness of Mind, and a sweetness of Measure, that will also assist in preventing her Name from dying with her!—whether he does not feel that the whole constitute the Works of one highly gifted, of one of those who may perhaps in future time cause it to be felt —that this too was an Age in which Genius had not deserted the realm.

ERRATA.

Page 24, The last word read *she.*
28, Line 14, read *Impostor.*
[illegible]6, Line 18, For *Sir George* read *Sir Charles.*
6[illegible], Line 3, read *Plutus.*
79, Line 2, For *Mr D.* read *Mr H.*
103, Last line but one, read *Witling's.*
118, Line 18, for *Grang.* read *Grand.*
142, Line 9, for *Grane.* read *Grand.*
153, Line 22, for *Fer* read *Ere.*
166, Line 8, read *between*
177, Line 29, read *for ever.*
214, Line 2 from bottom, for *rault* read *fault*
215, Line 7, for *a* read *the*
234, Last line but two, for *Brodignag* read *Brobdingnag.*
242, Line 19, for *in* read *and.*
260, Line 8 from bottom, dele *the* before the word *[illegible].*
269, Line 3, *me*, not Italic
347, Line 10, read *Counterscarps*
3[illegible], Lines 4, 5, 6, dele the *rules* before Julio Vincentio and Garcia
410, Line 6, for *Gracia* read *Garcia.*
4[illegible]8, Line 7, for *bride* read *bribe.*

CONTENTS

OF THE

FIRST VOLUME.

The following Comedy presents a pleasing picture of adventures, in a family all life and spirit, during the summer recess in the Country. It was brought out at Drury Lane in 1776, *and was the last play superintended by Garrick. His Epilogue contains a humorous description of the fashions of that day.*

In Lady Dinah *is held up to contempt, as fully as representation in a Theatre would well admit, the free-thinking Philosophy of a Female Student. In the under Plot, between her and her Servants, that mutual infidelity, by a law of the moral world, is inherent in a conspiracy of fraud on others, is enforced, not by dull maxims, but pleasantly by Example.*

Emily in this Comedy was the only new character in which Mrs. Siddons *appeared when she was a Candidate, the first time, before a London Audience.*

THE RUNAWAY.

A COMEDY.

PROLOGUE.

Oh, the sweet Prospect! what a fine Parterre;
Soft buds, sweet flowers, bright tints, and scented air!
[*Boxes.*]
A Vale, where critic wit spontaneous grows, [*Pit.*]
A Hill, which *noise* and *folly* never knows! [*Gallery.*]
Let Cits point out green paddocks to their spouses,
To me no Prospect—like your Crowded Houses,
If, as just now, you wear those smiles enchanting,
But, if you frown! my heart will soon be panting!
Your brows from wrinkling into Frowns to night
I'll bribe—but how? Oh, now I've hit it—right.
Secrets are pleasant to each child of Eve;
I've one in store, which, for your Smiles, I'll give.
Oh list! a tale it is, not very common,
Our Poet of to night, in faith's a—Woman!
A woman, too, untutor'd in the school,
Nor Aristotle knows, nor scarce a Rule
By which fine writers fabricated Plays,
From sage MENANDER'S, to these modern days:
How she could venture here I am astonished!
But, 'twas in vain the Mad-cap I admonished;
Told her of squeaking Cat-calls, Hisses, Groans,
Off-offs, and Critic's dread condemning moans.
I'm undismay'd, she cried; for critic men
Will smile on folly from a Woman's pen.
Then, 'tis the Ladies' cause! why, I'm secure—
Let him who hisses no soft Nymph endure,
May he who frowns, be frown'd on by his Goddess,
From Pearls, and Brussel's-point (*Boxes*) to Maids in Boddice.
[*Gallery.*]

Now, for a Hint of her intended feast:
'Tis rural, playful,—harmless 'tis at least;
Not over-stock'd with repartee or wit,
Though, here and there, *perchance* there is a hit.
She ne'er has sought Apollo's classic fire,
Or Muse invoked, or heard th' Aonian Lyre;
Her Comic Muse——a little blue-eyed maid,
With cheeks which innocence and health displayed,
In lieu of Phœbus——but a romping Boy,
Whose Taste is trap-ball, and a kite his joy;
Her Nursery, the study where she thought,
Framed fable, incident, surprise, and plot.
As, from surrounding hints, she caught her plan
Her Fancy flew from infancy to man;
Tom plagues poor Fan, she sobs—and loves him still,
Kate aims her wit at both, with roguish skill,
Our Painter watch'd the lines, which Nature drew,
Her fancy glowed, and coloured them for You;
A MOTHER's pencil gave the light and shades,
A Mother's eye through each soft scene pervades,
Her Children rose before her flatter'd view,
Hope spread the canvass, whilst her Wishes drew
We'll now present you drapery and features,
And warmly hope you'll like the sportive creatures;
Whilst Tom plays on with kites, and Fan with Dollies,
Till time matures them for *important* follies!

CHARACTERS.

MEN.

Mr. HARGRAVE.	— — —	*Mr. Yates.*
GEORGE HARGRAVE.	(*His Son.*)	*Mr. Smith.*
Mr. DRUMMOND.	— — —	*Mr. Bensley.*
Sir CHAR. SEYMOUR.	(*Harriet's Lover.*)	*Mr. Brereton.*
Mr. MORLEY.	(*Emily's Uncle.*)	*Mr. Aikin.*
JUSTICE.	— — — —	*Mr. Parsons.*
JUSTICE's CLERK.	— —	
JARVIS.	— — — — —	*Mr. Palmer.*
FIRST HUNTER.	— — —	*Mr. Bannister.*

WOMEN.

Lady DINAH.	— — — —	*Mrs. Hopkins.*
HARRIET.	(*Mr. Hargrave's Daughter.*)	*Miss Hopkins.*
BELLA.	(*His Niece.*) — — —	*Miss Younge.*
EMILY MORLEY.	— — —	*Mrs. Siddons.*
SUSAN.	— — — — —	*Mrs. Wrighten.*

SCENE.

Mr. HARGRAVE's House in the Country.

THE RUNAWAY.

ACT THE FIRST.

Scene I. A GARDEN.

Enter Bella, Harriet, *and* George *Hargrave.*

George. Oh, for the Luxury of dressing-gown and slippers!—the roads are so dusty, and the sun so hot—'twould be less intolerable riding Post in Africa.

Bella. What a wild imagination! But, by what mishap are you alone? What have you done with all the College youths?—This is the first Vacation you ever came home unaccompanied; I assure you Sir we are quite disappointed.

Geo. Most unconscionable creature! Never to be satisfied with Conquest. There's poor Lumley shot through by your merciless eyes.

Bella. A notable victory indeed! However, his name serves to add a Unit to the list of one's conquests, and so you may give him hope enough just to feed his sighs—but not to encourage his presumption.

Geo. Paragon of Generosity! And what portion of comfort will you in mercy bestow on Egerton

and Filmer, who still hug the chains of the resistless Arabella!

Bella. Upon my word, your Catalogue grows interesting—'tis worth while now to enquire for your Vouchers—Proofs, George, proofs!

Geo. Why, the first writes sonnets in your praise, and the last toasts you till he cannot see.

Bella. Oh, most surprising fortune! The Dulcinea of one; and to the other a CIRCE—transforming him into a beast. I hope you have better love-tokens for the blushing Harriet—How does——(*looking at Harriet*).

Harriet. Fie Bella—you use me ill!

Geo. Why sister! you plead guilty before the Charge is finished. But tell me, my sweet Harriet, who is the favoured mortal of whom you wish to hear?

Har. Indeed, Brother, I have no enquiry to make; —but, I imagine my Cousin can inform you whom she meant.

Bella. Oh, doubtless, I could make the enquiry for you; but you look so offended Harriet, that I dare not venture—ask for Sir Charles Seymour yourself.

Geo. Seymour! (*Aside.*—Oh, oh! very confidential is my friend, Sir Charles, truly; and this then is the object of his intended Visit!)—If Seymour be the man, my Sister set your heart at rest; he is not very distant from marriage—if I am not mistaken—with a fine blooming girl; (*looking at Harriet*) not more than nineteen—soft dove-like eyes—pouting lips—teeth that rival, doubtless, oriental pearl—a Neck—I want a Simile now—ivory, wax, alabaster—no! they wont do.

Har. (*With an air of Pique*) One would imagine, Brother, you were drawing the picture of your own Mistress, instead of Sir Charles's, your colours are so vivid.

Geo. A fine woman, Harriet, gives animation to

all around her: she is that Universal Spirit about which Philosophers talk, the Attraction that binds the system of Society.

Bella. Heydey, George! Did the charms of Lady Dinah inspire this rhapsody!

Geo. Charms! What, of that antiquated, gaudy, sententious, philosophic Lady, who blessed us with her long Speeches at dinner?

Bel. You must learn to be more respectful in your Epithets, Sir, for that antiquated, sententious, philosophic Lady designs you the honour, we suspect, of becoming your Mother!

Geo. My Mother! Heaven forefend—you jest, surely!

Bel. You shall judge.—We met her in our late visit to Bath. She renewed her acquaintance with your Father, with whom she had been intimate in Mrs. Hargrave's life time. He invited her to return with us, and she has been here this month. They are, frequently, closeted together. She has forty thousand pounds, and is Sister to an Irish Peer.

Geo. She might have been Grandmother to a Peer, by the years she has numbered. But, her excessive Stateliness and Decorum overcame me;—how can they agree with my father's vociferation, october, and hounds!

Bel. Oh, I assure you, wonderously well—she kisses Jowler, takes Ringwood on her lap, and, as for the october, she has more than once sipped out of your Father's tankard. Obstructing Delicacies are easily made to give way, when Schemes are formed in minds of *her* stamp.

Geo. My pretty Coquette Cousin Bella, take care to avoid that state in which *your* delicacy may give way! when you may rise from the labours of your toilette with no end in view but the conquest of—some Quixote Galant in his grand climacteric, on whom you'll squander more encouraging glances, than all the sighs and ardor of two-and-twenty can extort from you now.

Bel. Memento mori! Quite a College compliment! you ought rather to admit that my power will encrease, until, like *Ninon*, I sway more peremptorily at Eighty than at Eighteen. But, here's John coming, to summon us to Coffee.—Harriet!

Geo. Come, Harriet—why that pensive air? give me your hand.

Har. I'll only step and look at my birds, and follow you instantly.——(*Exeunt* GEORGE *and* BELLA *playfully*) "Set your heart at rest, my Sister!"—Oh Brother, you have robbed that heart of rest for ever. Cruel Intelligence! Perfidious Seymour! Yet, of what can I accuse him? He never professed to love me. Yes! his ardent looks, his sighs, his confusion, his respectful attentions, have a thousand times professed the strongest passion. Oh! a man cannot in honour be exculpated, who, though the word LOVE never pass his lips, by such methods defrauds a woman of her heart! [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

A Garden Parlour.

Enter GEORGE *and* BELLA, *at the Garden Door.*

BELLA *seating herself at a Tea Table.*

Bel. Hang this Lady Dinah—one's forced to be so dressed, and so formal! In the Country we should be all Shepherds and Shepherdesses; — Meadows, Ditches, and Rooks, make a strange combination with Court Manners!

Geo. Hist—she's in the Hall I see; I'll go and squire her in. [*Exit, and returns with Lady Dinah.*

Lady D. To you, Sir, who have been so long conversant with the classic manners of the Antients, the frivolous custom of Tea-drinking must appear ridiculous!

Geo. No Custom can be ridiculous, Lady Dinah, that gives us the society of the Ladies. The state of the young men of those days excites pity; they never partook of such elegant hours.

Lady D. (*aside*) He is all that his Father described!

Enter Mr. Hargrave.

Mr. H. No; Barbary Bess is spavin'd, let her be taken care of; I'll have Longshanks, and see that he is saddled by five. So, we shan't have you in the Hunt tomorrow, George; you must have more time to shake off the lazy rust of Cambridge, I suppose. —What sort of hours d'ye keep at College?

Geo. Oh, Sir, we are frequently up before the Sun, there.

Mr. H. Aye, then it must be when you have not been in bed all night I believe. And how do you stand in other matters? Have the old ones tired you with their Greek, and their Geometry, and their learned Experiments to shew what Materials air, and fire, and water, are made of—eh?

Bella. Oh, Sir, he never studied them closely enough to be tired His philosophy and mine keep pretty equal pace, I believe.

Geo. As usual, my lively Cousin! Why not say my Philosophy and your *Coquetry*—that would have been a Compliment! However, Sir, I am not tired of my Studies, though Bella has not exactly hit the Reason.

Lady D. (*to Mr. H.*) The Muses, Sir, sufficiently recompence the most painful assiduities. Those indeed who court them like the Toasts of the season, merely because it is the Fashion, are neither alive to their beauties, nor penetrated with their charms. But, these are faithless Knights;—your Son, I dare say, has enlisted himself amongst their sincerest votaries.

Geo. You do me great honour; and I have no

doubt that with the Muses you are familiarly acquainted. They shed their favours on a few only, but those who obtain them must, like you, be irresistible! (*Aside.* I'll catch her Ladyship's stile!)

Mr. H. (*aside*) Humph—I'm glad he likes her.

Lady D. You men are so full of Flattery! In Athens, in Lacedemon, that vice was, for ages, unknown—it was then that the Athenians were the happiest, and the Lacedemonians the most——

Bel. Oh mercy!—I have burnt my fingers in the most terrible manner!

Enter HARRIET, *from the Garden.*

Harriet. Dear Bella, I am quite concerned!

Bella. (*aside.*) Pho!—I only meant to break in upon her Harangues; there's no enduring so much Wisdom!

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Mr. Drummond.

Enter Mr. DRUMMOND.

Mr. D. Ah! my dear Godson!—why this is an unexpected pleasure. I did not know you were arrived!

Geo. I have had that happiness only a few hours, Sir, and was on the point of doing homage to you at the Park.

Mr. D. Ungracious Rogue! a few hours, and not been with me yet! However—stay where you are—stay where you are, George; you cannot come under my roof with Safety now, I assure you; such a pair of eyes—such a bloom—such a shape!——Ah Girls, Girls!

Harriet. Dear Mr. Drummond of what, or whom, are you speaking? You make me quite jealous.

Mr. D. Oh! you are all outdone, eclipsed—you

have no chance near my *Incognita*. Then she has the prettiest foot, and moves—a Grace!

Bel. Teasing Creature!

Mr. D. Pretty Bella! well, it shall be satisfied. Mr. Hargrave, I wait on you, Sir, to request a reception for a young Lady of Beauty and Honour, who has put herself under my care. But, as I really think my house a dangerous situation for her, considering that I am single, young, and handsome (*touching his cheeks*)—I cannot, in Conscience, subject her to the risk!—You, being a grave, orderly, man, and having a couple of decent, well-behaved young women for a Daughter and Niece, I think she will be more certainly protected here—And this is my business.

Mr. H. A young Lady put herself under your care! Who is she?

Mr. D. Her name she wishes to conceal.

Mr. H. That's very odd! Where did you meet with her?

Mr. D. At the house of a Widow Tenant of mine, where she had taken Refuge from a marriage to which her Uncle would have forced her. She had no companion but the good old Lady; whom I found employed in assisting her to weep instead of consoling her. In short, there were reasons for thinking her situation there placed her within reach of Intrusion, and I prevailed on her to leave it.

Mr. H. And so your Credulity is again taken in!—and the air of a weeping Beauty is the lure that caught you—ha! ha! ha!—will you never be discouraged by impositions?

Mr. D. I dont remember that I was ever imposed on.

Mr. H. No! dont I know how many people you have plagued yourself about—who had not one grain of Merit?

Mr. D. I want Merit, Mr. Hargrave; yet, all the blessings of Health and Fortune have not been withheld from me.

Mr. H. Aye, aye—there's no getting you to hear Reason on this subject.

Mr. D. 'Tis too late to reason now. The young Lady is at my house, I have promised to bring her hither, and we must endeavour to raise the poor girl's Spirits. She would have spoiled the prettiest face in England—I beg pardon Ladies—*one* of the prettiest faces, with weeping at the old Widow's.

Bel. An old Widow, a pretty Girl, a Lover, a tyrannical Uncle!—'tis a charming group for the summer amusement of a village circle. I long to see this Beauty.

Lady D. Her mere Beauty, according to Mr. Drummond, may be conspicuous enough—but, her Pretensions to Birth and Honour seem to be a more doubtful matter.

Geo. Pardon me, my Lady, why should we doubt of either? A Lady in such a situation has a Right to protection; and I hope, Sir (*to his father*) you will not withhold your's.

Mr. H. Oh, no, to be sure, George.—Sbud! refuse reception to a fine Girl! 'twould be, with you, a crying Sin, I warrant! But Mr. Drummond, I should suppose—

Mr. D. Come, you shall be satisfied. Though the weakness with which you reproach me would have induced me to have snatched her from an alarming situation without much Examination, yet, in compliment to your Delicacy, I have made proper enquiries:—she was placed under the care of Mrs. Carlton by a person of character, and she has dispatched a Messenger to her Uncle, who, I presume, will be here to-morrow.

Harriet. (*To Mr. H.*) Pray, Sir, permit us to wait on the Lady, and conduct her; I am strongly interested for her.

Mr. H. 'Tis an odd affair.—What say you to it, My Lady?

Lady D. As your family seems desirous to receive

her, Sir, I am sorry to perceive an Impropriety in the request. But I should apprehend that any appearance of Encouragement to young Ladies in disobedience—particularly when accompanied with the glaring Indecorum of an Elopement—

Mr. H. Aye; very true. Sbud, Mr. Drummond, how can you encourage such—

Mr. D. My Lady, I do not mean to encourage, but to restore the young Lady to her family. She seems terrified at the peculiar severity of her Uncle's temper; so, we'll put ourselves in form, receive him in full assembly, and divide his anger amongst us. Your Ladyship, I'm sure, must be happy to render the recovery from the first false step as easy as possible.

Mr. H. Why, aye, my Lady, there can be no harm in that, you know.

Lady D. Very well, Sir, if you think so, I can no longer perceive Impropriety.

Mr. H. Well then, Harriet, you may go I think.

Bella. And I with you, Cousin.

Mr. D. Come then my pretty doves—I'll escort you.—George, steel your heart, steel your heart! you Rogue.

Geo. Oh, it is steeled, already, Sir.

[*Ex. Mr. D. with Harriet and Bella.*

Mr. H. You need not go, George, I want to speak to you.

Lady D. (*aside.*—Bless me! What does he intend to say, now? he is going to open the affair to his Son —well—these are the most anxious moments in a Woman's life—but, one must go through them.) I have Letters to write, which I'll take this leisure to do, if you'll pardon my absence, Gentlemen.

Mr. H. To be sure, my Lady.

[*Both bowing. Exit Lady D.*]

Well, George, how do you like that Lady?

Geo. Inexpressibly, Sir.—I never saw a Lady so learned!

Mr. H. Oh, she's clever—she's an Earl's Sister too, and a forty thousand pounder! boy.

Geo. That's a fine fortune.

Mr. H. Aye, very fine, very fine—and then her Interest! suppose I could prevail with her—eh, George—if one could keep her in the family, I say—would not that be a hit?

Geo. An alliance with so noble a Family, Sir, is certainly desirable.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. The Gentlemen are in the smoaking parlour, Sir.

Mr. H. Very well—are the pipes and october in readiness?

Serv. Yes, Sir. [*Exit.*

Mr. H. Well then, we'll talk over the affair to-morrow. What, I suppose your stomach is too squeamish for Tobacco and strong beer? You'll find the Justice, and some more of your old friends, there.

Geo. Pardon me, Sir, I made too free with the bottle at Dinner. I believe a turn in the Garden is a better recipe than tobacco fumes.

Mr. H. Well, well, we wont dispute the matter with you now, boy—but, you know, I dont like Milksops.

Geo. (*smiling*) Nor I Sir. [*Exit.*

Mr. H. Aye, aye, George is a brave boy; he is not of the set of whipsters who, affecting to despise the jolly manners of their Ancestors, only show us—how greatly manners may be altered without being mended! (*Enter* JUSTICE.) It is at least doubtful whether we are a bit wiser, happier, or greater, than we were in good old Bess's days, when the men of Rank were robust, and the women of Fashion buxom.

Justice. Aye, aye, I wish the innovations of *Pretty Fellows*, and *Puny Girls* were antiquated. A rosy buxom lass, with eyes that sparkle like the glasses we toast her in—adad, I'd drink her health till the earth went gaily round under me.—But, what a plague, 'Squire, d'ye stay here for?—come and make your Speeches in t'other room; we can drink in the mean time—and there 'll be no time lost.

Mr. H. Well, well, I'll go; but, I want to consult you;—I have been thinking whether this Greenwood estate——

Jus. Tush, you know, very well, that I can neither consider or advise, till I have had my brace. I am as dark, till the liquor sends its Fires into my brains, as a lanthorn without its candle; so, if you've any obscure point to be examined, keep it until I'm enlightened.

Mr. H. Well, come along. [*Going.*

Enter CLERK.

Clerk. The people from the Crown, your Worship, and the Rose, and the Antelope, are here, again, about their Licences.

Jus. (*to Mr. H.*) There! this is what I've got by coming for you. I charged the Butler not to let this dog in.——Why how can I help it? bid 'em come again to-morrow.

Clerk. And here's a Pauper to be passed, a lame man with four children.

Mr. H. Well, turn him over to the Cook, and let him wait 'till we are at leisure;—he'll be better off than in the world at large.

Clerk. And a Constable has brought up a man for breaking into Farmer Thompson's barn last night.

Jus. Has he? (*seeming irresolute*) Well, tell him to wait too—we are going to be busy now. But, I hope he wont let the prisoner escape, as he did that dog Farlow.

Clerk. I wish he mayn't. But, Sir, Justice Manly is now in the smoaking-room, I have spoke to him about the Licences—and we mayn't have another bench this——

Jus. Will you please to march, Sir? [*Exit Clerk.*

Mr. H. Well done, old Boy! Burn himself could not have dispatched business with more Expedition. [*Going.*

Enter CLERK.

Clerk. The Miller is here, Sir, with a man that he catched with a Hare that he had taken in a Springe; but, the poor fellow, please your Worship, has a large Family!

[*Hargrave and Justice return.*

Mr. H. What!—a Hare! Come along Justice! [*Exit, with the Clerk.*

A burst of laughter from the smoaking Room, on the opposite side; the JUSTICE *looks wistfully back, and then follows Mr.* HARGRAVE.

SCENE III.

THE GARDEN.

Enter GEORGE, *reading.*

Geo. Here's a special fellow of a Philosopher now, would persuade that Pleasure has no existence, when nature abounds with it, courting the senses in a thousand varied modes; reigning, in the Understanding, in the faculty of Reason, and seizing the Heart—in the form of beauteous, all subduing, Woman!—And *one* there is—Memory! be faithful to her charms; shew me the beauteous Form—the Mind beaming in her eyes—the Blush and Smile that repaid my Admiration—

Enter BELLA.

Bel. Oh! monstrous—George Hargrave soliloquizing in the Garden, whilst the finest girl in England is in the Parlour! What is become of your Gallantry?

Geo. Gone, sweet Cousin, gone.

Bel. Indeed! Who has robbed you of it?

Geo. A Woman.

Bel. Come then and regain it from—*such* a Woman!

Geo. Is she so beautiful?

Bel. Beautiful! look at me—I myself am not so handsome.

Geo. Ha! ha! ha!—that I confess is an infallible proof. But, I'll bet this whole Volume of Wisdom against one of your *Billet-doux*, that she's not within fifty degrees of her who witched my heart away.

Bel. Witched indeed, if, in six weeks, it has not made one Excursion. I never knew you so constant before; however, I prophecy *her* Charm is broke. The divinity who will reign—perhaps for another six weeks—is coming down the steps with Harriet. But, that her Rays may not dazzle your mortal sight at once, shelter yourself behind the clump, and examine her through the Leaves. (*George goes and returns.*) Well, how d'ye like her?

Geo. Like her!—The air is all Ambrosia—every happy star has lent its influence, and, led surely by the Planet Venus, they have guided the event.

Bel. Hey dey! what event? This cannot be your Masquerade Lady!

Geo. It is, it is—the sweet thief herself! She is my Wood-Nymph—Oh, I am transported!

Bel. And I amazed. How can it be?

Geo. No matter how, whether by Chance or Witchcraft;—how could my thoughts be gadding now amongst the Stars!—Pshaw—away—and, at her feet indulge these transports! [*Going.*

Enter Mr. DRUMMOND.

Mr. D. So, so, so! and pray what's the Cause of all these transports?

Geo. You are the cause—'tis to you my dear Mr. Drummond that I am indebted for the happiness which dawns on me.

Mr. D. Then, God grant, my dear boy, the dawn may not deceive thee—but brighten into the fairest day. But, how have I been instrumental in all this?

Geo. That Lady I have seen before at a Masquerade—she possessed herself of my heart at once—but, I despaired of ever beholding her again—come, and present me! [*Going.*

Mr. D. Hold, George, hold; perhaps you had better never be presented; for, though you may have put her in possession of your heart, it by no means follows that she has had a corresponding complaisance for you. Suppose, for instance, such a trifle —as her's being engaged?

Bel. Oh unconscionable! to fancy the o'erbounding Imagination of a man in Love can pause over such a *reasonable* supposition—But, pray George postpone your *entrée* till you are more composed; I'll go and prepare her for the reception of a strange creature, that you may appear to advantage. [*Exit.*

Geo. Oh I will hope every advantage from so fortunate a Chance; her heart cannot—shall not—be engaged;—and she *shall* be mine! Pardon, my dear Sir, the effusions of my Joy!

Mr. D. I do pardon them. 'Tis a strange rencontre; are you acquainted with the Lady's Name?

Geo. No one knew her—She seemed like an angel descended to astonish each beholder, and vanish the moment she had fixed his adoration. Unluckily Mrs. Medlar stopped me, and a jealous Coxcomb, in the *suite* of my *Incognita*, seized that moment to hurry her out of the room.

Mr. D. Your ignorance perhaps I can relieve; but, you seem so disposed to Raptures, that I hardly dare tell you that I know something of her family. Perhaps I should not otherwise have been so ready to put her in your way.

Geo. I am convinced you know nothing that will not justify my Passion!

Mr. D. This eagerness to believe, might have been fatal to you. But, you are fortunate; she is the daughter of a deceased Major Morley, a man to whose friendship, and elegance of Manners, I was indebted for happy and rational hours amidst the bustle of a Camp.

Geo. Fortunate indeed! for then my passion has *your* sanction. But, I thought that, when you received her, you had not known who—

Mr. D. I knew her Father's picture on her bosom. But, her delicacy was so alarmed at the idea of exposing the Name of her Family, in such a situation, that she would not consent to be introduced here, but on condition of its being concealed.

Geo. Charming delicacy! I'll keep her secret—but—

Mr. D. Impatient Rogue! Well, come, I'll introduce you, and may the moment be auspicious!

[*Exit.*

Geo. (*following him*) Love! sweet Tyrant! I willingly submit to thee——never may I experience the cheerless void of Indifference again! [*Exit.*

ACT THE SECOND.

Scene I. *A Court before the house.*

Enter a Hunt *in Uniform.—A Flourish of Horns.*

Several. Hollo! hollo! ye hoicks, Hargrave! ille, ille, hoa!

First Hunter. Hollo—indeed! 'tis almost seven—(*looking at his watch*) the scent will be cold. Let's rouse the lazy rogue with a Song.

Second Hunt. Aye, a good thought—come begin.

First Hunt. *SONG.*

Arouse, and break the bands of Sleep,
Blush, Idler, blush, such hours to keep!
Somnus! what bliss canst thou bestow,
Equal to that which Hunters know!
Whether the mountains they attain,
Or swiftly dart across the plain,
Somnus! what joys canst thou bestow
Equal to those which Hunters know?
Hark, through the Wood, how our music resounds!
Horns are re-echoed, more sweet, by the hounds,
Deep throated and clear,
Our spirits they cheer;
They give us such Glee,
No dangers we see,
But follow with pleasure
'Tis Joy beyond measure
To be the first in at the Death, at the Death,
To be the first in at the Death!

Chorus.

Deep throated, &c.

Enter GEORGE, *from the House.*

First Hunt. Ah! my young Hercules!—But how in this dress? dont you hunt?

Geo. Oh, I have only changed Liveries. I used to wear that of Adonis the Hunter, but I resign it now for that of his mistress, Venus.

Second Hunt. And a hazardous service you have chosen. I should prefer Acteon's fate to the Caprice and Insolence of the handsomest coquette in England.

Geo. Acteon's fate would be less than you deserve, if, knowing my Goddess, you should dare profane her by such a description.

2d Hunt. May I never start Puss, if I believe your Goddess to be more than a very Woman;—that is, a Being whose Soul is vanity, form deceitful, and manners artificial.

Geo. Heydey!—turned Satirist on the Sex at eight and twenty!—what jilting Blowsalind has worked this miracle?

2d Hunt. Faith, I take my specimens from higher schools. Amongst the Blowsalinds there are still Nature and Honesty; but, examine Drawing-rooms and Operas—you'll find Nature discarded, and Honesty exchanged for Affectation and Hypocrisy;—so henceforward (*smacking his whip*) I abandon all Ladies but those of the Woods, and pursue only the simple game to which my hounds conduct.

Geo. Ha! ha!—until you become Society for hounds only.

Enter Mr. HARGRAVE *and the* JUSTICE.

Mr. H. So George,—come, you had better mount;—on the Downs I'll give you a Lecture upon Air, and the advantages of a sound constitution, of more

real advantage than all you could hear in a mus v college in fifty Terms.

Geo. I beg Sir to be excused this morning. To-morrow I'll resume my usual post, and lead—where you only will venture to follow.

Mr. H. Well—we shall put you to the test! [*Exit.*

Justice. (*to George*) Yes, yes, you're a keen Sportsman—I have seen the game you are in pursuit of, scudding away to the Garden;—beat the bushes, and I'll warrant you'll start!

First Gent. Troth, I started a fine young puss a few days ago;—She was shy and made her doublings, but I followed close and should infallibly have got her, if that sly poaching rogue, Drummond, had not laid a Springe in her way.

Justice. The very puss I mean! Drummond housed her here!

First Hunt. What, belonged she to a Preserve?—I'll lag after her no more. Come along Boys—come along—Ille ye hoies—for lawful game!

[*Exeunt, all but George.*

Geo. How critically did Mr. Drummond come to her relief!—from that brute she would have suffered every indignity that Ignorance, supported by the Pride of fortune, could have inflicted.—In the Garden! that's fortunate beyond expectation; midst Groves and Fountains a Lover should tell his tale;—and the sweet animation which beamed in her eyes last night, flatters me that she will not hate me for telling mine.—I'll go, in all the Confidence of Hope!

[*Exit.*

SCENE II.

THE GARDEN. *Enter* EMILY.

Em. What a heavenly morning! Surely 'tis Eng ld that Summer visits in her very perfection—sh

is no where else so lovely.—And, what a sweet Garden! But, should I not divert my attention from these, to commune with my Heart! Is it the brightness of the Morning, the verdure of the Garden, or the melody of the birds, that gives thee these enchanting sensations?—Ah, no—it is that thou hast found thy Lord—it is that I have again seen the man, who, since I first beheld him, has been the only Image in my mind. How different from the empty, the presuming Baldwin! Yet, to him I owe this obligation, that, if his hateful perseverance had not forced me from London, I might have seen but once the man who, that once, possessed himself of my tenderest wishes.——Ha! [*starting.*]

Enter GEORGE.

Geo. Abroad so early, Madam! In London, fine Ladies are yet in their first repose.

Em. If the Morning had been less enticing—yet, it would have been impossible to have resisted the chearful call of the Hunters.

Geo. Oh, it was my good Genius, I thank her, that inspired them, and did me the favour to lead me hither.

Em. Does she usually exert herself to no better purpose; her claims to your gratitude seem but weak!

Geo. 'Till lately I thought so, and supposed her the worst Genius that ever fell to the lot of poor mortal. But she has retrieved herself by one or two capital hits, and made me believe her one of the best disposed Sylphs in all the regions of Fancy.

Em. (*Smiling*) You recommend your attendant very strongly. Have you any intention to part with her?

Geo. I'll willingly exchange her, if your Genius will be so obliging as to take a fancy to me; I'll accept her with all my heart, and give you mine.

Em. You would lose by the exchange.

Geo. Impossible! My quondam friend would say a thousand things for me; so I should obtain your good opinion, which would be gain—whatever (*touching his bosom*) I might lose to attain it.

Em. Your Genius is gallant I perceive. But I was on the point of leaving the garden;—the Ladies I imagine are descended by this time.

Geo. Indeed they are not. But, though they were, these are precious moments which I must not lose! May I presume to use them in telling you, how happy I am made by the event which placed you in my Father's house? But you perhaps have forgot the presumptuous TANCRED, who gave such disturbance to the Gentleman honoured with the charge of protecting you at the Masquerade?

Em. No, Sir, I remember;—and, if I dont mistake, you were nearly engaged in a *fracas* with that Gentleman. I was happy when I observed you stopped by a Mask, and seized that moment to leave the room.

Geo. A moment, Madam, which I have never ceased to regret, 'till now;—but now, felicity so unexpected, and unhoped for—

Em. All this is out of place *here*, Sir. Under a mask a Shepherd may sigh, or an Eastern Prince indulge in florid speeches, but the delicacies to be observed in *real* life are quite incompatible with the stile of a Masquerade.

Geo. You, who are thus severe on supposed Compliment, will yet I hope treat more favorably a tender and respectful Passion.

Em. Sir!

Geo. I comprehend what your Delicacy must feel, and will therefore only add that, from the first moment I beheld you, my Heart has known no other [illegible]. You have been the Mistress of its wishes, [illegible]f its fate.

Em. (*hesitates*) Indeed, Sir, this—at a time when

I must appear in so strange a light to your family, hurts me greatly—surely my situation here ought—

Geo. I acknowledge, Madam, the confession I have dared to make nothing can excuse—but, the peculiarity of our situation. In a few moments your Uncle may arrive, and snatch you from us—such an opportunity never may be mine again—

Enter Mr. DRUMMOND.

Mr. D. So, so, my young ones, have I found you? 'Tis a most delicious morning;—but, is it usual with you, Madam, to taste the air so early?

Em. Yes, Sir, in the Country at least, I seldom sacrifice such hours to sleep.

Mr. D. Aye, 'tis to that practice you are indebted for the roses in your cheeks. What, I suppose, you brought the Lady into the Garden, George, to give her a Lecture on the beauties of Flowers—or—on other beauties—or, perhaps, more abstracted subjects have engaged your thoughts.

Geo. With such an Object before me, my thoughts cannot be abstracted, Sir. I found the Lady here, and had scarcely paid her my Morning Compliments when you appeared.

Mr. D. For which you do not thank me, I presume. But come, Madam, you are *my* Ward, until I have the pleasure of presenting you to your Uncle; and I come to conduct you to breakfast. George, you may follow—but, keep your distance!

[*Exit, with Emily.*

Geo. Distance!—as well might you expect shadow not to neighbour sunshine, or erring mortal to give up hope of mercy. With what sweet confidence she gives her hand to Mr. Drummond!—if these are the Privileges of Age, I'll be young no longer! [*Exit.*

Scene III.

Lady Dinah's dressing-room.

Lady Dinah *at her Toilette*, Susan *attending.*

Lady D. Both in the Garden?—and in deep conversation!

Susan. Yes, my Lady, I saw them from the window; he looked eagerly in her face, and she blushed, and looked confused.

Lady D. Confused indeed!—yes, so the impertinent affected to appear last night; though it was evident that she had neither eyes or ears but for Mr. Hargrave's Son.

Susan. I dare to say she is some Imposter. Husbands, as we servants say, in good truth are not so plenty, that a woman need to run away to escape one.

Lady D. I have no doubt of her being a low person. And, as to her Prettiness—'tis that of a wooden Doll; cherry cheeks, and eyes that, from want of expression, might be taken for glass.

Susan. I wonder that Mr. Hargrave did not stand by his own opinion, and let her stay where she was; but, whatever Mr. Drummond says is Law here.

Lady D. Because Mr. Hargrave imagines he'll make his son his Heir—but, if he does, he'll only come in for his share with the Paupers of the village.

Susan. Oh, nothing more; for that Mr. Drummond knows no better than to believe every melancholy tale that's told him—(here's the Bow, my Lady)—but, if he fancied her prettiness was in danger, he had better have kept her in his own house, and stood guard himself.

Lady D. Aye, whatever keeps him at home, would preserve his neighbours from much inconvenient interference.—Want of Rest (*looking in the Glass*)

absolutely transforms me. The detestable Horns, and their noisy accompaniment waked me from refreshing Sleep. How do I look to day, Susan?

Sus. Oh, charmingly, my Lady.

Lady D. 'Tis a most provoking circumstance that the colour of my hair should be so very soon changed —but, the Liquid entirely hides that accident, I believe.

Sus. Entirely, my Lady;—and then the Bloom, it is impossible to distinguish it from Nature.

Lady D. You need not speak so loud!—Pray what do you think of the young Collegian?

Sus. Oh, my Lady, he is the sweetest, smartest, man—exactly like the picture of your Ladyship's Brother that died when he was Twenty.

Lady D. People used to say that brother, and myself, bore a strong resemblance.

Sus. I dare say you did, my Lady; for, there's something in the turn of young Mr. Hargrave's face, vastly like your Ladyship's.

[*Stooping and laughing behind her.*

Lady D. Do you think so?—why then Susan, I believe I may trust you!—I think you can be faithful.

Sus. Most surely, my Lady, I would rather die than betray your Ladyship.

Lady D. Well then—I protest I hardly know how to acknowledge it—But as it must—

Sus. What my Lady? Your Ladyship alarms me.

Lady D. I too am alarmed, but I know your faith —(*Sighs*)—There will soon be a most intimate, and never to be dissolved alliance between me—and— Young Mr. Hargrave.

Sus. Law! *Young* Mr. Hargrave!

Lady D. Yes, young Mr. Hargrave, Madam. What dost stretch thy eyes so widely at, wench! Mr. George Hargrave, I say, is to be my Husband—I am to be his Wife—Is't past thy comprehension?

Sus. I must humbly beg your Ladyship's pardon —the whole house concludes your Ladyship is to

marry Old Mr Hargrave!—but, 'tis clear, the Son is a much more suitable match for your Ladyship!

Lady D. Old Mr Hargrave indeed! the whole house is very impertinent in its Conclusions. Go and bring the Bergamot hither.—(*Exit Susan.*) I marry old Mr Hargrave! monstrous absurdity!—and, by so preposterous a union, become the Mother of that fine young fellow his Son! 'twould be insupportable—no Mistress Susan, 'tis Young Mr. Hargrave—(*Enter Susan, suppressing a Laugh*) Here, scent that handkerchief, whilst I write to my Agent to prepare for the Writings. [*Exit.*

Susan. (*Scenting the handkerchief*) To prepare for the writings! a very fine business indeed, and what you'll sorely repent of, my good Lady, take my word for it. Not all these scented waters—nor any other waters—will be able to give you sufficient spirits this time twelvemonth. "*A never to be dissolved Alli-*"*ance*" between Fifty and Twenty, ha! ha! ha!—I shall expire with the ridiculous Secret—I must find Jarvis, to tell him—" Never to be dissolved Alli-"ance!" ha! ha! ha! [*Exit.*

Scene IV.

An Apartment. Enter George, Harriet, *and* Bella.

Bel. What Transformations this Love can make! You look as grave, George, and speak as sententiously, as a Fortune-teller.

Geo. And is it only to preserve your Spirits, Bella, that you keep your heart so cold?

Bel. The Recipe is certainly not a bad one, if we may judge from the Effects, on *your* spirits, of a heart inflamed by Love. But, I advise you, George, not to let an appearance of Gravity steal upon you—'tis the most dangerous character in the world for you.

Geo. How so?

Bel. Oh, whilst you can sustain that of a giddy, thoughtless, undesigning, *Great Boy*, all the impertinent and foolish things you commit will be excused —laughed at—nay, if accompanied by a certain manner, they will be applauded. But, do the same things with a grave reflecting face, and an important air, and you'll be condemned, *nem. con.*

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Sir Charles Seymour is driving up the Avenue, Sir. [*Exit.*

Geo. Is he?—I am rejoiced at his arrival.

Harriet. Sir Charles Seymour *here* Brother? I thought you told us yesterday that he was on the point of Marriage.

Geo. Well my dear Harriet and what then? Is his being on the point of Marriage any reason why he should not be here?—He is now hastening to pay his devoirs to the Lady. I left him yesterday at a friend's house on the road, and he promised to be here to day—but I hear him. [*Exit.*

Bel. Harriet! you look quite pale. I had no idea that Sir Charles was of *serious* consequence to you.

Harriet. My dear Bella—I am ashamed of myself. I'll go with you to your dressing room—I must not see him whilst I look so ridiculously; I dread my brother's Raillery.

Bel. Come then, hold by me. Deuce take it, what business have Women with Hearts? Interesting men should be shut out of Society, 'till they grow harmless by becoming Husbands! [*Exeunt.*

Enter GEORGE, *and* Sir CHARLES.

Geo. Ha! the birds are flown.

Sir Ch. Let us pursue them then.

Geo. Pho!—they are not worth pursuing. Bella's a Coquette, and Harriet in Love.

Sir Ch. Harriet in Love!

Geo. Aye, she is indeed!—but that's nothing. I have Intelligence for thee man—my *Incognita's* found, she's now in the house—my beauteous Wood Nymph!

Sir Ch. Miss Hargrave's heart another's!

Geo. Miss Hargrave's heart anothers! Why, my Sister's heart is certainly engaged. But how's all this?

Sir Ch. O George!—this blow distracts me.—Though I had not, 'till now, summoned courage to declare myself—I love—I love your Sister—to distraction doat on her!

Geo. Oh—oh! I'm to have your Secrets confided to me, Sir, when they can be but an incumbrance! Why did not you tell me this before? If your Heart had been as open to me, as mine has ever been to you, I might have served you; but now—

Sir Ch. Oh, reproach me not, but pity my disappointed hope, I long have loved her.

Geo. And not confide your Secret to *me!* You distrusted me, Charles, and will be properly punished.

Sir Ch. Fool, fool, that I was, thus to have planned a superstructure of happiness for all my life, that in one moment dissolves into air! I cannot trust myself to see her—I must leave you.

Geo. Indeed you shall not leave me, Seymour.—On what Foundation did you build your superstructure, that you seem so greatly disappointed?—Had my Sister favoured your addresses?

Sir Ch. No, I never presumed to make her any; my Fortune was so small that I had no hopes of obtaining your father's consent—and therefore made it a point of Honour not to endeavour to gain her affection.

Geo. (*Aside.*) Yes, you took mighty great care!

Sir Ch. But my Uncle's Will having removed every ,use of fear on that head, I flattered myself I had ñothing else to apprehend.

Geo. Courage, and your difficulties may vanish! 'Tis your humble distant Lover who has sung, through every Age, his scornful Phillis. You never knew a bold fellow, who could love women without mistaking them for Angels, whine about their cruelty.

Sir Ch. You tell me your Sister's heart is engaged —then what have I to struggle for? it was her Heart I wished to possess. Could Miss Hargrave be indelicate enough—I am sure she could not—to bestow her hand on me without her Heart, I would reject her.

Geo. Bravo!—nobly resolved! keep it up by all means. Come, now I'll introduce you to one of the finest girls you ever saw in your life—but remember, you are not to suffer your heart to be interested there, for that's my quarry—and peril to the man who attempts to rob me of my prize!

Sir Ch. Oh you are very secure, I assure you; my heart is impenetrable now forever! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

The Garden.

Enter Hargrave *and a* Servant.

Mr. H. Run and tell my Son I want to speak to him here. [*Exit* Servant.
Her Forty thousand pounds will just buy the Greenwood Estate: we shall then have more land than any family in the County, and a Borough of our own into the bargain. Aye—But suppose George should not have a mind to marry her? Why, as to his Mind, when two parties struggle, the weaker must give way;—the match is for the advancement of your Fortune, say I, and if that cant satisfy your mind, you must teach it, what I have always taught you—Obedience.

Enter GEORGE.

Oh, George, there's an affair of consequence that—that——

George. I am all Attention, Sir.

Mr. H. I—I dont design that you shall return to College any more. I have other views, which I hope will not be disagreeable to you.—You—you like Lady Dinah, you say?

Geo. (*Hesitates*) She is a Lady of great Erudition without doubt.

Mr. H. I dont know what your notions may be of her Age; I could wish her a few years younger, but—

Geo. Pardon me, Sir, I think that to her Age there can be no objection, and the preference her Ladyship gives to our family is certainly a high compliment.

Mr. H. Oh—oh! then you are acquainted already with what I was going to communicate to you—I am surprised at that!

Geo. Matrimonial Schemes are seldom long concealed, Sir.

Mr. H. I was a little uneasy about what you might think of this affair, on which I have never conversed with any one but Lady Dinah; but perhaps she may have hinted it to her Woman, and then I should not wonder if the whole parish knew it—and all the neighbouring parishes too! However, you have no objection, and that's enough; though, if you had, I must have had my way, George.

Geo. Without doubt, Sir.

Mr. H. Have you spoken to Lady Dinah on the subject?

Geo. Spoke—who *I* Sir?—n--o—Sir. I could not think of addressing Lady Dinah on so delicate an affair, without your permission.

Mr. H. Well then, my dear Boy, I would have

you speak to her now. And, I think, the sooner the better.

Geo. To be sure, Sir—I shall obey you.

Mr. H. Well, you have set my heart at Rest—I am as happy as a Prince.—I never fixed my mind on any thing, in my life, so much as I have done on this marriage; it would have galled me sorely if you had been against it—but you are a good boy, George, a very good boy, and I'll go in, and prepare Lady Dinah for your Visit. [*Exit.*

Geo. Why, my dear father, the prospect of your nuptials has quite elated you. But, why must *I* make speeches to the Lady?

Enter BELLA.

Bel. What, have you been opening your heart to your father, George?

Geo. No, he has been opening his to me!—he has been making me the confident of his passion for Lady Dinah.

Bel. No!—ha! ha! ha!—is it possible?—What stile does he talk in? is it flames and darts—or Esteem and Sentiment?

Geo. I dont imagine my good father thinks of either;—her Fortune, I presume, is the object. I shall not venture to hint an objection; for contradiction, you know, only gives him fresh ardor: Where are Seymour and Harriet?

Bel. Your Sister is in the drawing-room, and Sir Charles I just now saw in the Orange-Walk, with his arms folded thus—and his eyes fixed on a Shrub, in the most *Penseroso* stile you can conceive! Why, George, he has no appearance of a happy youth in a state of transmigration into a Bridegroom!

Geo. Ha! ha! ha!

Bel. Why do you laugh?

Geo. At the embarrassment I have thrown the simpletons into—ha! ha! ha!

Bel. What simpletons? What embarrassment?

Geo. That you cannot guess, my sweet Cousin, with all your penetration.

Bel. I shall expire if you wont let me know it—now do—pray George—come—be pleased to tell me! [*Curtseying.*

Geo. No, no, you look so pretty whilst you are coaxing, that I must see you in that humour a little longer.

Bel. That's unkind! Come—tell me the Secret—though I believe I begin to guess it!

Geo. Nay, then I must tell you; for I shall lose the pleasure of obliging you if you should find it out. I have made each believe that the other has a different engagement—and yet Seymour and my Sister are equally attached to each other!

Bel. Oh, I'm rejoiced to hear it.

Geo. Rejoiced! I assure you, Sir George has highly offended me.

Bel. How so? He is your Friend, and in all respects an eligible match for your Sister.

Geo. Very true—but he has been as chary of his Secret, as though I had not deserved his utmost confidence.

Bel. I believe he never addressed your Sister.

Geo. So he pretends, and perhaps he did not in Form; but that is a ridiculous Subterfuge;—he tampered with her Heart, by silent tender observances, the surest battery when there is time to play it off. If any man, who had thus obtained my Sister's heart, had left her a prey to disappointment, and then insisted—that he had *said* nothing—my resentment should have taught him that his conduct was not less dishonourable, than if he had knelt at her feet, and sworn a thousand oaths.

Bel. Mercy on us! If every girl had such a Snapdragon of a brother, no *Beau* would venture to come near her.

Geo. I perceive that Sir Charles has been heaping

up the measure of his offences some time. I recollect now the tricks he played to get Harriet's picture.—At last he begged it to get the Drapery copied for his Sister's;—I have not a doubt that it is at this moment in his bosom, though he has sworn a thousand times that it is still at the Painter's.

Bel. Ha! I'll fly and tell her.—If I dont mistake, she'd rather have her picture there, than ranged in a Gallery of Beauties.

Geo. Destruction—stop!—And pray why are you not as angry as I am? Shut out, by parchment provisoes, from all the flutters of Courtship yourself—you had a right to participate in Harriet's.

Bel. Very true. But what pleasure can we have in tormenting two hearts so attached to each other?

Geo. I do mean to plague them a little—and it will be the greatest favour we can do them; for they are such sentimental people, you know, that they'll blush, and hesitate, and torment each other six months—before Explanation. By alarming their Jealousy, they'll betray themselves in as many hours.

Bel So there's not one grain of Mischief in all this!—all downright Charity! Well, really, in that light, there is some reason—

Geo. Aye, more than is necessary to induce you to join in it, even though there were mischief;—so promise assistance with a good grace.

Bel. Well, I do promise; for I really think—

Geo. Oh, I've your Word—no more parley.

Bel. *A-propos!* Here's Harriet—I'm just as angry as you wish me, and you shall have a good account of her.

Enter HARRIET.

Harriet. Brother, Mr. Drummond I fancy wonders at your absence; he's alone with the Lady—

Geo. He possesses a privilege then that half mankind would grudge him! [*Exit.*

Bel. Have you seen Sir Charles yet?

Harriet. Indeed I have not. I confess I was so weak as to retire twice from the Drawing-room, because I heard his Voice; though I was conscious my absence must appear odd, and fearful the cause might be suspected.

Bel. Ah! pray be careful that you give him no reason to guess it. I advise you to treat him with the greatest Coldness, Harriet.

Har. Most certainly I shall, whatever it costs me. It would be the most cruel mortification if I thought he could ever suspect my weakness. I wonder, Bella, whether the Lady he is to marry—is as hamdsome as George describes her.

Bel. What is that to you child?—never think about it. If you take any interest about him, you'll never behave with a proper degree of Scorn.

Har. Oh, do not fear it; I assure you I possess a vast deal of scorn for him.

Bel. (*aside.* I'm sure you fib!)—Well, now for a Sample, he is coming this way I see.

Har. Is he? come then, let us go!

Bel. Yes, yes, you are quite a Heroine I perceive. Surely you will not fly, to prove your indifference? Stay to mortify him with an appearance of Carelessness and Good humour.—For instance; look at him with the unmeaning eye with which one looks over an acquaintance shabbily dressed.—When he speaks to you, look another way, and, suddenly recollecting yourself, exclaim—"What are you saying, Sir Charles! I beg pardon, I really did not attend"—then, without minding his Answer,—"Bella, I was thinking of that elegant fellow who opened the Ball with Lady Harriet—did you ever see such expressive eyes? and then the air with which he danced!"

Har. You'll find me a bad scholar, I believe,—however I'll go through the interview if you'll assist,

Bel. Fear me not.

Enter SIR CHARLES.

Sir Ch. Ladies, I had despaired of finding you—I hope I dont intrude.

Bel. Sir Charles Seymour can never be an unwelcome intruder.

Sir Ch. Miss Hargrave—I have not had the happiness of paying my respects to you since I arrived—I hope you have enjoyed perfect Spirits since I left Hargrave place. (*Confusedly.*)

Har. (*Affecting Gaiety.*) My Spirits are seldom so good as they seem to be now, Sir.

Sir Ch. Your looks indeed speak you in possession of that happiness I wish you! (*Sighing.*) You, Miss Sydney, are always in spirits.

Bel. In general, Sir. I have not Wisdom enough to destroy my happiness by Reflection.

Sir Ch. Do you deem being wise a proof of unhappiness?

Bel. One might really think so; for wise folks are always grave.

Har. Then I'll never aim at Wisdom;—henceforward I'll be all Gaiety, devote myself to pleasure, and live only to laugh!

Bel. Unless you do as I do—laugh at your own absurdities—you may not always find a subject, Cousin.

Har. Oh, we need not confine our views at home; the world abounds with subjects for Mirth;—the Men will furnish a sufficient number, though other resources fail.

Sir Ch. Miss Hargrave was not always so severe.

Har. Fie, Sir Charles—dont mistake Pleasantry for severity;—but, exuberant Spirits frequently overflow in impertinence—I pardon your thinking that mine do.

Sir Ch. Impertinence! Surely you cannot suppose I meant to—

Har. Nay, Bella, I appeal to you; did not Sir Charles intimate some such thing?

Bel. Why—a—I dont know—To be sure there was a kind of distant intimation;—though, perhaps, Sir Charles only means—that you are rather awkward in your merriment!—ha! ha!

Sir Ch. Vastly well, Ladies!—well then we'll mutually agree to understand expressions in what manner we please; and therefore—when a Lady's eyes speak Disdain, I may construe it Love!

Har. That's an error men are apt to fall into; but the expressions of the eyes are always sincere—they come from the Heart!

Sir Ch. Then pray examine mine, Madam, and, by the report you make, I shall judge of your proficiency in their language.

Bel. Oh, I'll examine them, Sir Charles;—I am a better judge than Harriet. Let me see—aye—'tis so—the one talks Love and Jealousy—the other of Hope and a Wedding. Now, dont I read well?

Sir Ch. Could but that hope be fulfilled, I would ask no more of Fate! Will You examine whether she reads correctly or not, Madam? (*To Harriet.*)

Har. You are so entirely satisfied with Bella's performance, Sir, that I will not attempt to render them differently. Come, Cousin, let us return to our company. (*Impatiently.*)

Bel. (*Apart*) Fie! that air of Pique is enough to ruin all.

Sir Ch. Do you then not find the garden agreeable, Miss Hargrave? I begin to think it charming!

Har. I find nothing particularly agreeable in it, Sir,—and the happy seek Society! I wondered to see you alone. Come Bella.

Bel. Bravo! [*Exit, with Harriet.*

Sir Ch. Why,—what is become of that dove-like Softness, which threw me into dreams of bliss?—Seek Society! Oh Harriet—*my* Harriet! to possess thy society, with the hope that once glowed in my bosom, would be a blessing for which I would willingly sacrifice every other hope in Life [*Exit.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I. AN APARTMENT.

Lady DINAH, *and Mr.* HARGRAVE, *sitting.*

Mr. H. I am surprised Lady Dinah at your thinking in this manner. When I spoke to my Son this morning, I assure you he expressed a great deal of Satisfaction about the affair—I wonder indeed he has not been here.

Lady D. Now, I almost blame you, Mr. Hargrave—pardon me—but you have certainly been too precipitate; your Son has scarcely been at home four and twenty hours, and cannot possibly have received any Impression! or formed an Idea of my Character.—He has been—I must say too—so much engaged with other persons, that I have had no opportunity of conversing with him; and how, so circumstanced, can he have formed a Judgment of his own Heart?

Mr. H. Why—he has given the best proof in the world that he has formed a Judgment, for he told me, this morning, that the prospect of the union made him quite happy! I dont know what other proof a man can give that he knows his own heart;—and let me tell you, Madam, I have accustomed my children to pay a proper regard to my Inclination!

Lady D. I am apprehensive, Sir, that Mr. George

Hargrave's Obedience may influence him more than I could exactly wish. And, I assure you, I cannot think of uniting myself to any man, who does not prefer me for my own sake.

Mr. H. His Obedience to me influence him more than you could wish! Why really I dont understand you my Lady.—(*Aside.* Zooks! I thought she had been a sensible woman.)

Lady D. Not understand me Mr. Hargrave! I have too high an opinion of your Good Sense, to suppose that I can be unintelligible to you!

Mr. H. My opinion is that an obedient Son is likely to make a kind husband. George is a fine young fellow as any in England, as I have often told you; and there's not a woman in the kingdom, who might not be proud to call him her husband.—Too obedient!

Lady D. (*Aside.* Bless me! this man has no Ideas!) You mistake me, Mr. Hargrave; I do not mean to lessen the Merit of Obedience—but—I confess—I wish him to have a more delicate, a more tender motive, for offering his hand to me.

Mr. H. Why, look ye, you have a great Understanding to be sure—and I confess you talk above my reach—but, I must nevertheless take the liberty to blame your Ladyship. A person of your Ladyship's experience, and, allow me to say, your *Date* in the world, must know that there are occasions on which we should not be too nice!

Lady D. Too nice! Mr. Hargrave. (*Rising.*)

Mr. H. Aye, too nice, my Lady.—A Boy and Girl of Eighteen have Time before them; they may be whimsical, and play at shilly-shally, as long as they have a mind. But, my Lady, at a certain Season, we must leave off these tricks, or be content to go to the grave, old Bachelors and——(*shrugging his shoulders*)

Lady D. I am utterly astonished! Mr. Hargrave, you surely mean to offend—you insult me!

Mr. H. No—by no means—I would not offend your Ladyship for the World. I have the highest Respect for you, and shall rejoice to call you my Daughter; if you are not so, it will be your own fault; for George, I am sure, is ready, the moment you give your consent. The writings shall be drawn when you think proper, and the marriage brought about without delay.

Lady D. Well, Sir, I really do not know what to say.—When Mr. George Hargrave shall imagine it a proper period to talk to me on the subject—I—I—

Mr. H. Well, well—I allow this is a topic on which a Lady does not chuse to explain herself, but to the principal. I waited on your Ladyship only to inform you that I had talked to my Son concerning the affair, and to incline you, when he waits on you, to give him a favourable hearing.

Lady D. Mr. Hargrave, a person of your Son's merit is intitled to a proper attention from any woman he addresses.

Mr. H. There—now we are right again; I was fearful that you had not liked my Boy, and that your Difficulties arose from that quarter; but, since you like George, 'tis all very well, very well.—I am sure George loves *you;* I'll go and send him to you this moment, and he shall tell you so himself—you'll surely believe him! [*Exit.*

Lady D. Mr. Hargrave, Mr. Hargrave! bless me, what an impetuous obstinate Old Man. What can I do—I am in an exceedingly indelicate situation—he will tell his Son that I am waiting here in expectation of a Declaration of Love—surely never woman was in so awkward an *embarras!* I wish the son possessed a little of the Father's impetuosity—this would not then have happened.

Enter George.

Geo. Your Ladyship's most obedient Servant.

Lady D. (*Curtseying confusedly*) S--i--r—

Geo. (*Very gravely.*) My father permits me to make my acknowledgments to your Ladyship, for the Honour you design our Family.

Lady D. I must confess, Sir, this Interview is somewhat—unexpected—it is indeed quite premature—I was not prepared for it—and I am really in great Confusion!

Geo. I am sensible that a visit of this kind, to a Lady of your Delicacy, must be a little distressing; but I intreat you to be composed. I hope you will have no reason to regret a resolution which myself, and the rest of the family, have so much cause to rejoice in—particularly my Father.

Lady D. You are very *polite*, Sir. We have had so little opportunity of conversing, Mr. Hargrave, that I am afraid you express rather your Father's sentiments than your own. It is impossible, indeed, from so short a knowledge, that you can have formed any Sentiments of me yourself.

Geo. Pardon me, my sentiments for you are full of Respect! and I am convinced your Qualities will excite the Veneration of all who have the honour of being connected with you. (*Aside.* My father could hardly have done it better).

Lady D. (*Aside.* Why this young man has certainly been taught to make Love by his Tutor at College!)—I think it necessary to assure you, Sir, that—that this affair has been brought thus forward by Mr. Hargrave, and that the Proposals he made, in which it was evident his whole *Heart* was concerned, were quite unexpected.

Geo. I have not the least doubt of it, my Lady, nor am I at all surprised at my Father's earnestness

on a subject so interesting.—(*Aside.* What can she mean by apologizing to me!)

Lady D. It would certainly have been proper, Sir, to have allowed you time to have formed a judgment for yourself.

Geo. The time has been quite sufficient. I highly approve the steps my father has taken; but, if I did not, Obedience to his determination would certainly have prevented my opposing them.

Lady D. (*Aside.*) Really! A pretty extraordinary confession!

Geo. (*Aside.* I must end this ridiculous visit!) Shall I have the honour of conducting your Ladyship to the company?

Lady D. Sir!—N--o—Sir! I have some orders to give my woman; I will rejoin the Ladies in a few minutes.

Geo. Then—I'll wish your Ladyship a good morning! [*Exit.*

Lady D. Amazement! what a visit from a Lover! Is this the language in which men usually talk to women with whom they are on the point of Marriage? —Respect! Veneration! Obedience to his Father! —And—" Shall I have the honour of conducting your Ladyship to the Company?"—A pretty Lover-like request truly!—But, this coldness to me proceeds from a cause I now understand. This morning, what fire was there in his eyes! what animation in his countenance! whenever he addressed himself to that creature Mr. Drummond brought here? Would his request to her have been, to conduct her into Company?—no—no!—But I must be cautious—I must be patient now;—but, you will find Sir, when I am your Wife, your glances, if not directed to me, shall, at least in my presence, be addressed to no other! [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

SCENE II.

ANOTHER APARTMENT. BELLA *playing.*

SONG.

Haste, haste, ye glowing steeds of Day,
In Ocean's bosom hide the beams;
Mild Evening, in her pensive grey,
More soft and more alluring seems.

Yet why invoke the pensive Eve?
Or, sighing, wish away the Morn?
Their interchanging can't relieve
The Heart by pangs of Absence torn!

Away with Music! it only makes me melancholy. Heighho! the Lovers infect me I believe.—Attractive Italy! what are your Spells? Oh, for Fortunatus's Cap! I'd convince myself in a moment whether my doubts are justly founded.—And, suppose they are, what then? Ah! whilst they think me but Ice, the gaiety of my disposition only serves to conceal a Heart as susceptible as those of the most tender of my sex—

Enter EMILY.

ah, my dear Madam, I am rejoiced to see you; I have been just long enough alone to be tired of myself, and charmed at so agreeable a relief.

Em. Can that ever be the case with Miss Sydney? I thought you had possessed the happiest flow of Spirits in the world.

Bel. Oh! your great Spirits are mere Jack-a-lanterns in the brain, dancing about, shining, and making Vagaries; whilst those who possess Happiness, enjoy their Treasure soberly and quietly.

Enter GEORGE.

Geo. Ladies in Council!—on Fashion or News?

Bel. On a less important subject—laughing at the Slaves we have, and forging chains for mòre.

Geo. I dont believe it;—for, Beauties have no Contrivances. Nature spares them the trouble; for Schemes, she substitutes sparkling eyes, timid blushes, and a Multitude of Graces gliding o'er the form. (*Looking at Emily*).

Bel. Well, after all, men are delightful creatures; their Flattery, in conjunction with Cards and Scandal, help one through the day tolerably well. I dont know how we should exist without all these, in the Country.

Geo. And which of them would you relinquish in Town?

Bel. Not Flattery, because it keeps one in Spirits, and gives a glow to the Complexion.—Scandal you may take away;—but pray leave us Cards, to keep Fashionable Crouds awake!

Geo. You would give up Scandal to substitute, I suppose—Conquest.

Bel. Ridiculous! Conquest is not such an object with Women as the Men imagine. I, for one, should conceive a Net, that would catch the hearts of the whole sex, a property of very little value.

Geo. But you would think it a very pleasant one, my Gentle Coz; for, at least (*archly*) you'd pick out one happy Favorite, before you gave the rest to despair.

Bel. Positively no—I dont know one that I should not let escape with the rest.

Geo. Now, how can you fib with such an unblushing face? I'll give you (*to Emily*) Bella's Secret. She has, at this moment, an Image in her heart that says—Oh fie! to her tongue.

Bel. Indeed Mr. Effrontery!—whose Image?

Geo. Listen with greediest ear; to catch the transporting sound!—breathe not e'en softest Zephyrs whilst I articulate the name of—

Bel. (*stopping her ears*) Oh, I wont hear it!

Geo. Belville! (*Loudly.*)

Bel. Oh, frightful!—Dont attend.—George's belief is always under the influence of his Fancy.

Em. If I may judge from your Looks, he has not, in this instance, hinted at a Fiction.

Bel. His guess would have been as good, if he had named Prester John.

Geo. H-r-r-m—I wish it may be so! for I have heard a story about a certain Lady upon the Continent, whom a certain Gentleman—

Bel. Thinks handsomer than Bella Sydney—mortifying—ha, ha, ha!

Geo. Nay more, to whom he devotes his hours.

Bel. (*Petulantly*) His Heart!

Geo. On whom he doats.

Bel. Pshaw!

Geo. Grows melancholy.

Bel. Nonsense!

Geo. Fights for her.

Bel. Ridiculous!

Geo. Lives only at her feet.

Bel. You are really very insupportable, Sir!—do find some other subject to amuse yourself.

Geo. Ha! ha! ha! the gudgeon has bit! See, Miss Morley, a Coquette struggling with serious Love! Are not those pouts, and angry blushes, proofs of Belville's happiness?

Em. I cannot perceive these proofs—I think you flatter Mr. Belville too highly.

Bel. Oh, you are a good Girl! and, I assure you, perfectly right. Lovers, thank our stars! are too plentiful, for an absent one to give much pain.—(*Apart to George.*—What! turn your arms upon your associate, George? I'll break the League, and discover all.)

Geo. You dare not—you love Mischief too well; it is as dear to you as the sighs of your Lover.

Bel. A-propos! where is Sir Charles?

Geo. In the garden, probably—sighing to the winds;—and I wish you'd find him, and leave us.

Bel. Why, aye—the winds perhaps will waft his sighs to Harriet, and she must not hear them yet—and so, Sir Charles—— [*Exit.*

Em. Oh, pray make me one of your party!— [*Going.*

Geo. Stay, I intreat you. Believe me they will not thank you—come I'll tell you all about it—

Em. I'll hear it from Miss Sydney.

Geo. Nay, if you are determined— [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

The Garden.

Enter Harriet.

In vain do I endeavour to conceal it from myself—this spot has charms for me that I can find in no other! Here have I seen—perhaps for the last time—Sir Charles Seymour. Bella's presence was unlucky—I should have heard him! To be sure talking of Love to me would have been an insult that I must have resented—and yet, 'tis the only subject on which I could have wished to have heard him!—This is distressing—he is here again—he haunts this place. He does not observe me; I'll conceal myself, lest, unaided by Bella, I should not keep up my new character. [*Goes behind an Arbour.*

Enter Sir Charles, *looking anxiously around.*

Sir Ch. Ah! not here either!—Sweet resemblance of her I love, come from thy hiding-place! (*takes a Picture pendent by a ribbon from his bosom, and kisses it.*) In her Absence, thou art the dearest object

that can present itself to my eyes. What a Face is this!

> "'Tis beauty truly blent, whose red and white
> Nature's own sweet and cunning hand laid on!"

Enter GEORGE. (*Catches his hand with the Picture.*)

Geo. Ho! ho! so the Picture's come from the Painter's, is it Sir, and the drapery quite to your fancy?

Sir Ch. (*Recovering from Confusion.*) The artifice I used, he who loves can pardon!

Geo. And how many times a day dost thou break the Decalogue, in worshipping that image?

Sir Ch. Every hour that I live. I gaze on it, until I think it looks and speaks to me; all night it lies on my heart, and is the first object I address in the morning.

Geo. Why, man, instead of silken ties, your passion will end in hemp—come, confess, have you not been examining on which of these trees you would be most gracefully pendent?

Sir Ch. This *gaieté de cœur*, George, is inconsistent with a tender passion; to be plain, I believe you know very little about it.

Geo. You are egregiously mistaken. We are both Lovers, but the difference between us lies thus: Cupid to me—is a little familiar rogue, with an arch leer, and cheeks dimpled with continual Smiles;—to you—a terrible Deity, deck'd out in his whole Regalia of Quivers, Darts, Flames, and so forth! I play with him—you—

Sir Ch. Spare yourself the trouble of longer Explanation;—All you would say amounts to this, you love with Hope—I with Despair!

Geo. Very concise, and most pathetically expressed! Melancholy suits your features, Charles—'twere pity your Mistress should encourage you; it

would deprive you of that *something* in your air which is so touching—ha! ha! ha!—poor Seymour! Come, let us go in search of the Girls, they are gone to the Wood; who knows but you may find a Nymph there, who'll have the kindness to put hanging and drowning out of your head!

Sir Ch. Oh, would sweet Celia meet me there,
With soften'd Look, and gentler air,
Transported, to the Wood I'd fly,
The happiest Swain beneath the sky,
Sighs and Complaints I'd give the wind,
And IO's sing, were Celia kind.

(*As he pronounces the Verses, George laughs, and scans them on his fingers.*)

Geo. Why Cupid's *deaf* as well as blind!

[*Exeunt.*

HARRIET *comes from behind the Bower.*

Har. Her Picture in his bosom! and kiss it with such rapture too! Well, I am glad I am convinced. —I am perfectly at Ease! He loves then without Hope, and George was mistaken in supposing him so near Marriage. But he loves, notwithstanding. Her Picture lies all night on his heart, and her Idea is never absent from his mind.—Well, be it so; I am perfectly at Ease! and shall no longer find a difficulty in displaying an Indifference that is become real—Oh, Seymour! [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

SCENE IV.

The Wood.

Enter Lady Dinah. *Looking behind her.*

Insolent wretch! Nothing less than the conviction of my own Senses would have induced me to believe so shocking an Indecorum. I saw you look at him with eyes that were downright gloting; I saw him snatch your hand, and press it to his lips with an ardour that could not be exceeded. And, when the Creature pretended to blush, and made a reluctant effort to withdraw it,—*my* Youth, so full of Veneration and Respect for me, refused to resign it, till she had given him a gracious Smile of Reconciliation! Surely they do not perceive me. See there! Nay, if you will come— [*Goes behind a Shrub.*

Enter Emily, *followed by* George.

Em. I entreat you, Sir, not to persist in following; You'll force me to appeal to Mr. Drummond for protection.

Geo. You need none Miss Morley, that you will not find in my Respect! It is ungracious to deprive me of conversing with you.

Em. If you presume to believe your attentions would not displease me in my proper character, I ought to be offended that you address them to a person of whose Name and Family you are ignorant.

Geo. Can a Name deprive you of that face, that air—or rob you of your mind?—those are the Objects which I address with the most passionate vows of—

Em. I positively will not listen to you. When you

know who I am, I may, perhaps, converse with you on my own terms (*Lady* DINAH *listening*—Aye or on any terms)—That is—the instant you attempt to be dangerous, I shall be reserved.

Geo. How, dangerous?

Em. Oh, if, unexpectedly, you should appear to grow of Consequence enough to endanger my heart, I shall escape from you.—I shall remain only, whilst you are harmless.

Geo. This is not to be borne—I will not be harmless—I declare open War against your heart, not in play—but downright earnest.

Em. Nay, then, I collect at once all my Force to oppose you;—my heart will stand a long Siege depend on it.

Geo. A ten years siege would not deter me; if I could hope it would yield at last.

Em. Oh, I permit no hopes. If you should vanquish in spite of me—I can only bewail its captivity.

Geo. Your admission that I may take the field, is all that I can at present hope; and therefore—in all due and regular form—on my knees attractive creature—

Lady D. (*Listening*)—Aye, such Veneration and Respect as *this* indeed!

Em. Hold, Sir—I will be so merciful, as to give you this notice—that, whenever you kneel, I shall fly. [*Runs out.*

Geo. And I—that I shall pursue, till my ATALANTA confesses I have won the prize—

As George is following Emily, Lady D. comes out against him with a reproachful air, and passes him.

So! (*Aside.*—There's a Look! what a blessed Mother-in-law I shall have!) [*Exit.*

Lady D. What! not stay even to explain—to apologize!—follow her before my face—Revenge! Yes, yes, she'll yield without the trouble of a ten years siege—she'll capitulate in less than ten hours. Oh,

ye shall both suffer for this—I'll go this instant and effect something. [*Exit.*

Enter SUSAN.

Ha! ha! ha! is it so, my Lady? I must see if I cant make myself useful here. A Lady like mine is the only one that a Girl of Spirit should serve. I'll follow, and aid your Ladyship with my counsel before you have time to cool—(*going*, *returns*)—oh, 'tis needless, here she ebbs back—after her flood of passion.

Enter Lady DINAH; *not seeing* SUSAN.

Lady D. A moment's Reflection has convinced me that I should be wrong. He must not suspect that I influence his father against the Minion, nor will I allow her the satisfaction of thinking she gives me the pangs of Jealousy. But, I will not lose him! something must be done.

Sus. Oh, my Lady, I was witness to the whole! A base man! I could have trampled him under my feet.

Lady D. Base, indeed. But 'tis on her my resentment chiefly falls—oh, Susan, Revenge!

Sus. I am sure my heart aches for you, my Lady, there's nothing I would not do.—Oh, she's an artful slut!

Lady D. If thou canst discover any thing that will rid me of her—command my Fortune!

Sus. Oh, my dear Lady—your fortune—as to that my Lady, that's out of the question. But I know your Ladyship's generosity; I think I could send her packing—perhaps before night.

Lady D. Can you!—The instant she goes I'll give you two hundred pounds.

Sus. (*Curtesying*) She shall go, my Lady, if I have management, or Jarvis a tongue.

Lady D. Jarvis! are you mad? I would not have him suspect that I am concerned in the affair for the universe.

Sus. Oh, dear my Lady, I vow I would not mention your name—no, not for three hundred pounds from any body else—no, no, Miss shall be got rid of without giving Jarvis, or any one, the least reason to suspect that your Ladyship is privy to the matter. Miss told a fine tale to get into the house, I fancy I know as fine a tale that will get her out of it.

Lady D. I am convinced she is an Impostor, and I wonder Mr. Hargrave does not see it; but, there will be more time spent, and labour lost, in rousing his stupid apprehension—than in explaining to an Enthusiast the conceptions of a Bolingbroke!

Sus. I am more afraid of Mr. Drummond, than of him.

Lady D. Aye, he will support that Girl's Interest —in order to mortify me.

Sus. That does'nt signify, my Lady. I have a card, as good as any he holds, to play against him. Your Ladyship must have seen that the old Justice has full as much weight with the 'Squire as Mr. Drummond.

Lady D. I have observed that Mr. Drummond is continually wavering between them. They influence his actions like two principal Senses; Mr. Drummond is the friend of his Understanding, the other of his Humour.—But, what card have you to play?

Sus. I mean to play the one of these senses of his against the other, that's all. As for this Justice, I am mistaken if I cant govern him as much as all *his* Senses put together.

Lady D. My hopes catch life Susan! I suppose you have the way to the old fool's heart; at all events the Girl must be got rid of.

Sus. To be sure what I am doing, behind her

back, against the young Lady, according to the notions I once had, is not quite right—but—

Lady D. Some vulgar notions, I suppose, and common-place; but you may trust to me! My track of Reading has taught me, that to act upon extended Principles is the most enlightened course—that the fulfilment of a Duty sanctifies the *Means*, and that to procure our *own* welfare is our first Duty.—There's the Dinner bell!—I must walk a little, to recover my Composure, before I take my seat as the young Lady's foil! [*Exit.*

Sus. I'm sure she cant have a better.—Ha! ha! ha! two hundred pounds! Oh the advantages of Jealousy and Revenge! I might have served one of your good sort of orderly old women till I had been grey. These two hundreds will quicken Mr. Jarvis a little—we shall see him more attentive I fancy than he has been, and then farewell to Servitude—ah! Jarvis.

Enter JARVIS, *bowing affectedly.*

Jar. "So look'd the Goddess of the Paphian Isle,
When Mars she saw, and conquer'd with a smile."

My dear Goddess, I kiss your fingers—I have been hunting for you in every walk of the Wood.

Sus. (*Tenderly*) Why, how came that, Jarvis?

Jar. Why, I have the same kind of necessity for you, that a Beau has for a Looking Glass—you enable me to perceive the effect that my appearance produces, which keeps me in good humour.

Susan. Oh, if you want to be put in temper, I have got an excellent Cordial.—Now, to prove yourself the clever fellow you think you are!

Jar. That *you* think me, my Dear, you mean. But, what extraordinary occasion has occurred for the exhibition of my talents?

Sus. Listen!—We have discovered that the young

'Squire thinks Eighteen a prettier age than Fifty—that he prefers Nature's roses to the Perfumer's—and that Gravity and Learning are no match for the fire of two hazel eyes, assisted by—the Reasoning of Smiles and Dimples!

Jar. And he's in the right on't. Did'nt I tell you this morning they reckoned without their host?

Sus. Here he has been on his Knees at the feet of the Damsel, and her Ladyship behind that bush—deeply impressed with his Transports—Ha! ha! ha!

Jar. Ha! ha! ha! George Hargrave marry our Old Lady!—No, no; I have a very good opinion of that young fellow;—he's exactly what I should be if I was Heir to his father's Acres—just such a spirited, careless, deportment—a certain prevailing Assurance. Upon my Sagacity, Susan, you and I ought to have moved in a higher Sphere!

Sus. Come come, to Business. You must consider this affair in a more serious point of view: 'twould be a Shame that, because this Girl has a pretty face, and was found weeping by an old Gentleman who took compassion upon her—it would be a Shame, you know, that for these reasons she should marry into a great family—and cheat the Sister of a Peer of a Husband! Read the Story this way, act with Spirit, and our Lady will give us Two Hundred Pounds—on the day of our Marriage!

Jar. Humph!—on the day of our Marriage! Cannot you child prevail upon your Lady to give *me* the Two Hundred, without tacking that Condition to it?

Sus. Pho! Sauce-box!—Well, but the Two Hundred—what will you do for them?

Jar. Do for them—oh, any thing—the most extravagant thing in the world;—run off with the Girl—blow up the house—turn Turk—or marry you!

Sus. Well, you have only to contrive to open some Door—for this stray Girl to walk out of the house.

Jar. But how?—by what means?

Sus. Have you forgotten the occupation which once gave employment to these talents of your's, fitting you, as you think, for any Company—I mean, have you forgotten when you belonged to a Company of Country Players?

Jar. Oh, I well remember the Barns that I have made echo with the Ravings of Orestes, and the Stables in which I have sighed forth the woes of Romeo!

Sus. Well, Mr. Romeo, have you no recollection of a pretty Juliet? an elegant Girl—in short do you not remember one of the strolling party exceedingly like the strange guest now in the house!

Jar. Humph!—Why, what evil spirit sent thee to tempt me this morning?—So, I am to sell my Honour!—my Honesty—

Sus. Pho pho!—Honesty and Honour are sentiments for people whose Circumstances exempt them from Temptation. Let our Industry—we may as well call it by that name you know—but make us independent, and we'll be as honourable and honest as the best of 'em—so let's go in and settle our Plan!

Jar. It has ever been the Fate of Great men to be misled by Women—and, therefore, my sweet Abigail—I am your's! [*Leads her off.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

Scene I. An Apartment.

Harriet *and* Bella *seated.*

Bel. Nay but hear him—only hear him Harriet.

Har. Can this be you, Bella, who this morning seemed fearful that I should not treat him with sufficient Scorn, who would now persuade me to allow a private interview to a man, who is professedly the Lover of another?

Bel. How apprehensive you are! Why must you suppose he wants to talk to you about Love, or on any topic that his approaching marriage would make improper?

Har. Why, what *can* he have to say to me?

Bel. Perhaps to consult your Taste about his Carriages—or some Presents to his Bride—or

Har. Bella—this is downright Ridicule!

Bel. Well then you wont admit him.—(*Seeming to go*) Though he is going to leave us directly I shall tell him you dont chuse to see him. But I approve your Caution, Harriet, you are perfectly right.

Har. Going to leave us directly, Bella!

Bel. Immediately, my dear; I heard him order his chaise, and mutter something about insupportable! But I think you'll be exceedingly imprudent

in receiving his visit, and I advise you by all means to refuse it.

Har. Dear Bella!

Bel. Well, then you will see him—I shall acquaint him. But remember, Scorn Harriet—Scorn! [*Exit.*

Har. Now, what am I to expect? My heart beats strangely. But, remember, foolish girl, the Picture of his mistress is in his bosom!

Enter Sir CHARLES.

Sir Ch. The request, Miss Hargrave, I ventured to make, by Miss Sydney, must appear strange to you. The Engagements which I—

Har. Render it an extraordinary request, indeed, Sir!

Sir Ch. I fear'd you would think so; and, conscious of those engagements, I should not have presumed to have made it—but that, as it is probably the last time I may ever see you, I seize it—I know not with what view—to tell you—that I adore you!

Har. Sir Charles! I am astonish'd;—in my Father's house at least, I should have been secure from such an insult.

Sir Ch. Oh, forgive! Nothing could have driven me to this declaration but Distraction.

Har. The Picture you wear, Sir Charles, might console you, surely.

Sir Ch. Ah! I thought you were ignorant Madam of my possessing it.

Har. I am not, Sir; and I wonder how you could presume—but I deserve this insult for listening to you a moment. (*Going.*)

Sir Ch. Oh, stay, Miss Hargrave, I intreat you.—I will give up the Picture, since it so offends you—yet, how *can* I part with it?

Har. Oh, keep it, Sir—keep it by all means. I have no right to claim such a Sacrifice. (*Going.*)

Sir Ch. You *have* a right, Miss Hargrave; here it is—(*kissing and offering it*)—but, do not rob me of it!

Har. Rob you of it! In short, Sir Charles, you redouble your rudeness every moment—

Sir Ch. I did not think you would have so resented it; but, I resign it to you—nay you *must* take it.

Har. I take it, Sir!—(*Glances it, then takes it with an air of Doubt*)—My Picture—incredible!

Enter GEORGE *and* BELLA, *both laughing*.

Sir Ch. Your Picture alone, Miss Hargrave, I could so value.

Geo. Look at the Simpletons—ha! ha! ha!

Bel. What a fine Attitude!—do it again, Sir Charles—ha! ha! ha! Well Harriet, how do you like Sir Charles's mistress? Is she as handsome as George represented her yesterday?

Geo. Hold, hold! 'tis time now to have Mercy. My dear Harriet, allow me to present you my most valued Friend, as the man whom I should rejoice to see my Brother. To you, my Seymour, I present a Sister—whose Heart has no engagement, that I am acquainted with, to supercede your claim.

Sir Ch. I am half frantic, with Joy and with Amazement.

Geo. Forgive the embarrassment I have occasioned you; you have suffered, but your felicity will be heighten'd by Comparison. My dear Harriet, that Seymour has always loved you, the picture that so offended you is a proof that you cannot doubt.

Sir Ch. And that you were so offended, is now my Bliss!

Har. You, George and Bella, have taken a Liberty with me, which you must never expect me to pardon.

Geo. Nay, but you shall pardon; and in token thereof—give him back your picture this minute!

Sir Ch. Return it, I intreat you.

Bel. Come, give the poor thing its bauble.

Har. Well Sir, as you had no Share in this brilliant contrivance—you may take the picture. (*Gives it him.*) You, George, are never so happy, as in exercising your Wit at my expence!

Geo. And you, Harriet, never so heartily forgave me in all your life—and therefore—

Sir Ch. Hold, George; I cannot permit that Miss Hargrave should suffer in this manner. This hour I shall ever remember with—

Bel. Come Harriet, I must take you away, that Sir Charles may bring down his Raptures to the level of common mortals; at present I see they have mounted him into the clouds.

Har. 'Tis merciful to relieve me!

[*Exit, with Bella.*

Sir Ch. Charming Miss Sydney!—I'll never quarrel with your vivacity again. But, pray Sir, why have I been made to suffer thus?

Geo. Because you did not make me the confident of the Passion which prompted you to obtain my Sister's picture. But, my vengeance has been friendly; for my Plot has told you more of my Sister's Heart in a few hours, than all your Sighs and Humility would have obtained in as many months.

Sir Ch. I thank you; and my present happiness receives a brighter glow, from this illusion of misery. I'll fly and pour forth my joy and gratitude at the feet of my charming Harriet. (*Going.*)

Enter BELLA.

Bel. Oh, stay, stay—we may want your assistance. Here's your Father coming George. Your repartee to Lady Dinah, at dinner, spoiled her Digestion, and she has been representing you—that's all!

Geo. I hope she represented her Sneer too; which suffused with tears the loveliest eyes in the world. Could I do less than support her against the Ill-humour of that antiquated Pedant?—By Jupiter, I'll

draw her in Colours to my Father that shall make him shrink from the Fate he is preparing for himself.

Enter Mr. HARGRAVE.

Mr. H. Why, George, how's this? Do you know what you have done?—you have affronted Lady Dinah.

Geo. To affront her was not my Intention, Sir; I only meant to convince her that she should not insult the amiable young Lady whom Mr. Drummond placed here for Shelter.

Mr. H. Dont tell me—Amiable young Lady! how do you know what she is? On the footing on which you are with Lady Dinah, let me tell you, if she had insulted a hundred young Ladies you ought not to have seen it—at least not resented it.

Geo. Pardon me, Sir! I did not conceive that Lady Dinah would have assumed so much Privilege in your house—at least not until she became your Wife.

Mr. H. What!—what's that you say, Sir!

Geo. This unexpected Remonstrance prompts me to express my Astonishment, Sir, at your Attachment to that Lady. She is the last woman in the World, Sir, whom we could wish to see in the Station of our amiable Mother.

Mr. H. —Your MOTHER!

Geo. If you saw her in the light I do, Sir, you would think on your Wedding-Day with dread!

Mr. H. —Why—why—are you mad!

Geo. Sir, if you wished to keep your Engagement to her a Secret, then I am sorry I mentioned the Affair—but—

Mr. H. Look ye Sir,—I now perceive that you have all that backwardness in obeying me that I at first expected, and, in order to conceal it, are attempting to make the connection appear ridiculous. But,

I give you Notice that wont do! I know what I'm about, and my Commands shall not be disputed.

Geo. Commands! Sir. What can this mean?—I am quite at a loss—

Mr. H. (*Going*) Well then, to prevent all further Mistakes, and to stop all further Parley—I acquaint you, Sir, that I design Lady Dinah, not for your Mother—but for your WIFE:—and moreover, that the Marriage shall take place immediately! [*Exit.*

(*A long Pause, staring at each other.*)

Bel. So! so! so!—and is this the end of all the closetings?

Sir Ch. What Confusion!—it must be all a Dream!

Geo. Wife!—Lady Dinah *my* Wife.

Bel. Ha! ha! ha!—Dear George, forgive me! but I must laugh, or I shall expire—ha! ha! ha! oh—my Cousin Dinah!

Geo. Pray, Bella, spare your Mirth, and tell me what I am to do—for I am incapable of thinking.

Bel. Do! why run to Lady Dinah! fling yourself at her feet, tell her you had no idea that the Bliss was designed for *you!*—and—ha! ha! ha!—that you'll make her the tenderest, fondest, Husband in the world!

Geo. Oh, Bella—for once forget your Sprightliness—I cannot bear it. Seymour! what *am* I to do?

Sir Ch. My dear George, I pity you from my Soul—but, I know not what advice to give you.

Bel. Well then, seriously; I think—but—ha! ha! ha! 'tis impossible to be serious! I am astonish'd you are not more struck with your Father's tender Care of your future Fortune, and Felicity!

Geo. Have you no Mercy, Bella?

Bel. You have none upon yourself, or, instead of standing here, with that sorrowful countenance, you would be with Mr. Drummond.

Geo. Ah!—He is indeed my only Resource, I'll fly to him this instant; if that fails me—I am the most miserable man on Earth! [*Exit.*

Sir Ch. What can induce Mr. Hargrave to sacrifice such a fellow as George—to a Lady Dinah!

Bel. Her Rank and Fortune.——His god is Pluto, he forgets that the ancients deified also Love. I dread the lengths to which his Obstinacy may carry him. Let us find Harriet, and tell her the strange Story;—but—she is not the only person, I fear, to whom it will be painful.

Sir Ch. Is it possible that Lady Dinah—in all the Profundity of the Sagacity which she gives herself credit for—can imagine such an union prudent?

Bel. Come—be merciful!—No wonder that Love, which has made Philosophers forget their Systems, and Heroes their Valour, should make a woman—forget her Wrinkles!

SCENE II.

THE GARDEN.

Enter Jarvis *and* Susan.

Jar. Whu! 'tis a service of Danger. (*Shrugging his shoulders.*)

Sus. Sure—you've no qualms!

Jar. No no, child, no qualms;—but, though an affair of this sort would, in another region, make my Fortune, in this cold Northern Latitude there's no room for the bold hits of a man of Genius.

Sus. Oh, dont despair—there's tolerable encouragement at home!

Jar. Why yes—in the first instance; but then, we've an ill-manner'd custom, of a dozen people of dull Morals in a Jury box being inquisitive every now and then. What the Lawyers mean by Vacation I cant conceive; the fellows seem to be always upon the Stir, and make a man constantly ask himself—how will such an act tell next month at a trial?

—However, I must venture!—Let us consider our foundation:—this Girl was placed under the care of the old gentleman by a person of credit—

Sus. Pho! she only brought a *Recommendation.* Dont we know how easily a Character is to be had —of *silver* purity, or of *golden* brightness? 'Tis a wonder she did not obtain a Name too—I warrant she had sufficient reasons to conceal her own.

Jar. It does look like it; there's a Mystery in the affair. Now, our Lady, you know, has often condescended to tell us that the Philosophers say that we have a right of explaining mysteries as we please.

Sus. Aye, to be sure; and this is the Explanation. —She is an artful Girl, who would rather be a fine Lady in real life than merely *acting* the Character on a Country Stage; and thinks the shortest way is by quitting it, and gaining the heart of some credulous Youngster, who'll make her his wife for the sake of her Beauty.

Jar. True—That with this view she told her story to Mr. Drummond, who—innocent soul—not seeing her drift, introduced her here, where she plays off her artillery on the gun-powder heart of George Hargrave, Esquire, the Younger.

Sus. Delightful! My Lady will be quite in my power—I shall, in turn, be Mistress after this! And, now I think on't, I believe, to obtain the fruits of it, I must continue to live with her—You and I can be married just the same you know!

Jar. Oh just the same, my dear, just the same; nothing shall prevent that—(*Aside.* But my being able to coax you out of the Two Hundred!)

Sus. Hark! here comes the Justice. Slip away, and leave me to manage him; I'll, at least, so hoodwink him, that he shall be blind to our manœuvres, and lend a willing ear to our Proofs. You need not be jealous now.

Jar. Jealous! no, no; I have none of your good sort of people's vulgar feelings. [*Exit.*

Enter JUSTICE.

Jus. Aye, aye! have I caught you, my little picksey? come, no struggling—I will have a kiss, by Jingo.

Sus. (*Prevents him*) Laws, you are the strangest Gentleman—

Jus. You are mighty coy, methinks!

Sus. Coy—so I should be. What have Gentlewomen, without Fortune, else to recommend them?

Jus. Aye, but that rosy pouting mouth tells different tales I warrant to the fine gentlemen in London.

Sus. Lawk! Sir, why dont you return to London? Lady Dinah speaks mightily of your Talents, and says, if you'll try your Luck again, you need not be a Justice—but a Lawyer; and that, to make up for your not having Interest before, you shall have all her's—when she is Lady Dinah HARGRAVE.—But pray! wont Mr. Drummond be in the way of all this, isn't he against the Match?

Jus. Oh, I know nothing of *him*—he's queer and close. One can never get him in at a bout—he's not staunch!

Sus. I believe he is not staunch to our match; and, if that is prevented, we shall leave you in the Country directly!

Jus. Who can prevent the match, Sweety?

Sus. Perhaps Mr. Drummond;—*he* can manage Mr. Hargrave.

Jus. Not so well as I can, I believe, you little sly rogue you! [*Chucking her chin.*

Sus. Use all your Interest, and bring the match about; then we shan't part—you little sly rogue you! [*Chucking his chin.*

Jus. Oh, I'll plead for the Wedding!

Sus. Well, but that's not all.—I dont like the young Stranger this same 'Squire got room for here!

Jus. Adad, the sparklings of her Eye fire one's heart as if it were made of tinder.

Sus. Upon my word! the sparklings of *her* eye!

Jus. Oh—I dont mean—that is—Oh, I would rather have one kind look of thine, sweet Mrs. Sukey, than—

Sus. Ah! I believe you're a Coquette!—However, I think there are reasons for getting this sparkling Angel out of the house. I have observed looks, I dont like, between her and young Hargrave, and, you comprehend me, whatever interrupts the Marriage—we leave you!

Jus. Let me see—and consider—and weigh—

Sus. Not Scruples of Conscience—too nicely—Mr. Justice!

Jus. Not if your Smiles should draw off my Attention—sweet Mrs. Sukey.

Sus. You wont oppose, if we should show full grounds for sending her packing?

Jus. Why, on the Honour of a Magistrate, I must oppose—if the grounds are clearly illegal;—to be sure the Law is not very apt to be *clear*—Come now, give me one kiss, you little, dear, cruel, soft, sweet, charming baggage.

Sus. Oh, fie! you wont ask your wages before your contract is performed— [*Runs off.*

Jus. (*following*) Stop—dont run so fast!—dont run so fast, Hussey— [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

AN APARTMENT AT HARGRAVE'S.

Enter Mr. DRUMMOND *and* GEORGE.

Mr. D. I wish I had known all this, before proceedings had gone so far. On a Subject of this nature, no woman can be affronted with Impunity.

Geo. I am careless of her Resentment. I will never

be her Husband; nor husband to any woman—but her to whom I have given my vows.

Mr. D. Ah! are your proceedings so forward?

Geo. Yes, Sir; I have made the offer of my heart and hand; and, though her Delicacy forbids her to give, whilst our families remain unknown to each other, the assent my Heart aspires to—yet, she allows me to catch hopes, that I would not forfeit to become Master of the Universe.

Mr. D. There's a little of the Ardor of Youth in this—the Rashness of Youth, George. However, I will not blame you; many, who are now old and prudent, once would have entered the lists with equal ardor in competition for such an object.

Geo. The more the better! I would bear off my lovely prize from amidst an embattled Phalanx.

Mr. D. I dont restrain you George! I like to see a man romantic in Love and Friendship: he who is not an Enthusiast in those noble passions, has not a Mind of sufficient Strength—to rise hereafter into flights of Honour, Fortitude, and Patriotism.—But, begone! here comes your Father.

Geo. May the Subject inspire you with resistless reasoning. [*Exit.*

Enter Mr. HARGRAVE.

Mr. D. So! Mr. Hargrave.

Mr. H. So, Mr. Drummond; what, I guess your business!

Mr. D. I suppose you do; and I hope you are prepared to hear me with Temper.

Mr. H. You'll talk to no purpose; for, like most who listen to Reason, I have already an unchangeable opinion.

Mr. D. Strange Infatuation! why must George be sacrificed to your Ambition? Surely it may be gratified without marrying *him* to your Lady Dinah.

Mr. H. How?

Mr. D. By marrying her yourself, which, till now, all supposed to have been your design;—and *that* would have been sufficiently preposterous!

Mr. H. What! make me, a second time, the Slave of Hysterics, and Vapours! no, no, it is his turn now; I have escaped, catch me again who can.—What, her Ladyship is not youthful enough for George—that's the objection I suppose?

Mr. D. True, and the consequent dissonance of their Minds; it would not be less reasonable to expect a compact between Fire and Water, than agreement in such a marriage.

Mr. H. Pshaw!—I tell you the study of my life has been to make George—a Great Man; I brought Lady Dinah here with no other design. And now, when I thought the matter was brought to bear, when Lady Dinah had consented, and my son, as I supposed, was ready for the wedding—why! 'tis all a flam!

Mr. D. My good friend—the motives, on which you would sacrifice your son's Happiness, appear to me so weak—

Mr. H. Weak!—why I have so managed, as to provide a wife for George who will make him perhaps one of the First Men in the kingdom!

Mr. D. That is, she would make him a Court-Dangler—an attendant on Minister's Levees—one whose Ambition is to be foster'd with the Cameleon food of Smiles and Nods, and who would receive a familiar squeeze with more rapture—than the Plaudits of a NATION!—You would transform An Independent English Gentleman into such a Being, and fancy you had made him—GREAT!

Mr. H. Well, I'll cut the Argument short;—George *shall* marry Lady Dinah, or never have an Acre of my Land, that's all.

Mr. D. And he never shall possess a Rood of mine if he does!

[*Crossing each other; and traversing the Stage.*

Mr. H. There, I thought 'twould come to this: what a Shame it is for a man to be so obstinate! (*Aside.* But hold! if so, I may lose more than I get by the bargain!—he'll stick to his word.)

Enter JUSTICE.

Jus. I am very much surprized, Mr. Drummond, Sir, that I cant be let alone in the discharge of my Magisterial Duties, but must be continually thwarted by you!

Mr. D. This Interruption, Mr. Justice, is ill-timed, and rather out of rule;—I could wish you had chosen another opportunity.

Jus. You've a mighty right indeed, to complain of my not observing rules, Sir—you, who are continually breaking the Laws!

Mr. D. Ha! ha! ha!—What hen-roost robbery have you to lay to my Charge now?

Jus. Aye, Sir, you may think to turn it off by a Joke, if you please; but, for all that, I can prove you to be a bad member of Society—for you counteract the wise designs of our Legislators, and obstruct the Operations of Justice,—yes, Sir, you do!

Mr. H. Dont be so warm. What is this affair?

Jus. Why, the Poacher, whom we committed last night, Mr. Drummond has released, and given money to his Family! How can we expect a due Observance of our laws, when there is such shocking encouragement for breaking them?—Shall the Lords and Commons, in their Wisdom, assemble in Parliament to make Laws about Hares and Partridges—only to be laughed at?——'tis abominable!

Mr. H. Very true! And let me tell you, Mr. Drummond, it is very extraordinary that you will be continually—

Mr. D. Peace! ye men of Justice. I have all the regard for the Laws of my Country which it is the Duty, and the Interest, of every member of Society

to feel:—if the man had been a practised Poacher he should not have been protected by me;—the poor fellow found the Hare in his garden, which she had considerably injured—

Mr. H. Oh—oh! What, the rascal justifies himself!—an unqualified man give *Reasons* for destroying a Hare!—Destruction! if a gang of ruffians should burn my house—would you expect me to hear their Reasons?

Jus. (*Aside.* Aye, there it works! a quarrel between them may be useful Mistress Susan!)—There *can* be no reasons—if he had found her in his house—or on his table—and offered to touch her, I'd prosecute him for poaching.

Mr. D. We were talking on a subject, Mr. Hargrave, of more importance, at present, than this; and I beg you'll hear me further.

Mr. H. Enough has been said already, Mr. Drummond!—or, if not, I'll give you one Answer for all; —I shall never think myself obliged to study the Humour of a man who thinks in such opposition to me; I have a humour of my own, which I am determined to gratify in seeing George—a Great Man!—He shall marry Lady Dinah in two days; and all the Reasoning in the world, you will see, has less strength than my Resolution;—if I cant have the willing obedience of a Son, I'll enjoy the Prerogatives of a Father.—Come along Justice. [*Exit.*

(*The* JUSTICE *following—returns.*)

Jus. I did not know he was inclined to be so much up, Mr. Drummond, but I hope—

Mr. D. Why dont you follow, Sir! (*Exit Justice.*) —My Son shall be—a Great Man!—To such a Vanity as this, how many have been sacrificed! The happiness of Love, the felicities of a suitable Union, his Heart may be a stranger to;—but he shall convey my NAME, deck'd with rank, to a Posterity I

shall never see, though for this *he* may live a wretch! —This is the selfish Motive which beings, supposed to be rational, mislead themselves to believe is—Paternal Care!—This is the silent language of the Heart, which they persuade themselves is the dictate of Reason and of Prudence—

Enter EMILY.

Miss Morley!—why this pensive air?

Em. I am distressed, Sir. The delicacy of the motive, which induced you to place me here, I am perfectly sensible of—yet—

Mr. D. Yet, what my dear child?

Em. Do not think me capricious, if I entreat you to take me back to your own house, till my Uncle arrives.—I cannot think of remaining here.

Mr. D. (*Aside.*—'Tis then as I hoped.)—What can have disgusted you?—Come, be frank; consider me as a friend to whom you can safely open your Heart.

Em. Your goodness, Sir, is excessive.—If I must explain myself, the Lady who will soon have most right here treats me unkindly.

Mr. D. That you cannot wonder at. Be assured, I will effectually defend you from her insults. But —do you not pity poor George for the fate his father designs for him?

Em. Yes——I do pity him.

Mr. D. If I dared—I would go still further—I would hope that, as his Happiness depends on you—

Em. Sir!

Mr. D. Let me not alarm you. I am acquainted with his Love for you—May I know that it is not displeasing to you?

Em. So circumstanced, Sir—what can I say?—He is destined to be the husband of another.

Mr. D. It is enough. I pledge myself to you from this moment, and promise to effect your happi-

ness, if within the compass of my abilities or Fortune. But, that I may know my task—favour me with the key to your Uncle's Character.

Em. My Uncle—Sir—possesses a heart that would do him honour, if he would be guided by it. But, unhappily, he has conceived an opinion that his Temper is too flexible—that he is too easily persuaded; and the Consequence is, he'll never be persuaded at all.

Mr. D. I am sorry to hear that; a man who is positive from *such* a mistake, must be in the most incurable stage of obstinacy. However, we'll attack this man of Might; his inflexibility shall be besieged, and if it wont capitulate, we'll undermine it.

Em. Ah, Sir! my Uncle is in a state of mind ill prepared for yielding.—He returned from Spain, with eager pleasure, to his native country; but, the Disgust he has conceived at the alteration of Manners, which he supposes to have taken place, during his absence, has given him an Impatience that you will hardly be able to combat.

Mr. D. Take Courage! Let me, for the present, lead you back to your companions. I am obliged to be absent, it is but for a short time; I'll watch over you, and, if possible, lead you to Happiness.

[*Exit, leading* EMILY.

Enter Mr. HARGRAVE *and Lady* DINAH.

Mr. H. Aye, aye—Mr. Drummond's fine feelings have produced an adventure in my family indeed! And yet, I am a little puzzled—a Stroller—

Lady D. It is, doubtless, an extraordinary Story, Mr. Hargrave—and I beg you will yourself question my servant concerning it.

Mr. H. Why, what can the Design be?

Lady D. To *you* I should imagine the Design must be very obvious, though Mr. Drummond's penetration was so easily eluded. By assuming the airs and manners of a person of station, she doubtless

expects to carry some young heir on a Northern Jaunt, Mr. Hargrave!

Mr. H. Oh!—now, I understand your Ladyship! If your man can prove what he asserts, be assured she shall not stay in my house another moment.—We have no Young Heir to spare, here.

Lady D. But consider, dear Mr. Hargrave—before you take any steps in this affair—that 'tis possible we may have been deceived. For, though my servant avows he is sure of her—yet, he may be mistaken—

Mr. H. Oh, Lady Dinah—I shall see into that immediately.

Enter JUSTICE.

Jus. (*Aside.* Why the Gipsey seems to have found out a Charge against her, with a vengeance).—Where does my Clerk stay with Burn!—But, I know I am right;—yes, yes—'tis a clear case. By the Statute *Anno primo Caroli Secundi*, obtaining goods on false pretences is felony— with Benefit—h-r-r-m—with Benefit—(*Goes to the Side.*) Tell my Clerk to bring up Burn, and the Young Man the Witness—d'ye hear?—Now, obtaining Entrance into Houses, upon false pretences, must be worse.—I have no doubt that it amounts to a Burglary, and that I shall be authorized to commit—

Enter JARVIS, *and the Justice's* CLERK.

Here Witness, do you stand there. (*The Clerk gives him Burn's Justice*)—In the first place—(*settling his Wig*)—in the first place, how old are you?

Mr. H. Fiddle de dee—What signifies how old he is?

Jus. Why, yes it does—for—if he is not of Age competent—

Mr. H. Pshaw, Pshaw—I'll examine him myself

—(*The Justice pores over Burn.*) How long is it since you left the Strollers you was engaged with?

Jar. It is about two years since I had the Honour of being taken into my Lady's service—I had left the Company a month.

Mr. H. And did you leave the young Lady in the Company, when you quitted it?

Jar. Yes, Sir; and I have never seen her since, till now.

Mr. H. I am strangely puzzled—I dont know what to think—

Jus. It is indeed a difficult Case—a very difficult case—Burn says, in his chapter on VAGRANTS—

Mr. H. Prithee be silent—this time you are not likely to clear up matters.

Jus. A Justice be silent!—A silent Justice!—a pretty thing indeed—close the mouth of the Law!

Mr. H. What does your Ladyship advise?

Lady D. I advise! I dont advise, Mr. Hargrave!

Jus. Why then let the Parties be confronted.

Mr. H. Aye,—let the parties be confronted.— (*Rings*)

Jar. Aye, aye, let us see one another! when I have once accused her a little—she'll be too much dash'd to be able to deny the Charge!

Enter SERVANT.

Mr. H. Go and tell my Daughter, that I desire she'll bring her Visitant here—the young Lady. [*Exit Servant.*

Jar. (*Aside.* Two glasses of Brandy—and tremble yet! I wish I'd swallowed the third Bumper!)

Enter HARRIET *and* EMILY.

Har. Robert informs us, Sir, that you request our attendance.

Mr. H. Yes, Harriet—I did send Robert—'Tis

about an odd affair—I had rather—but I dont know. Pray, Madam, be so kind as to tell us if you know any thing of that person?—(*Pointing to Jarvis.*)

Em. No, Sir, I believe not—I do not recollect——I may have seen him before.

Jar. Humph!—What, Miss Jenny! you dont recollect—what have you forgot your old companion William Jarvis?

Em. I do not remember indeed that I was ever honoured with such a companion; and the mistake you have made in my Name convinces me I never was.

Jar. Poh, poh! This wont do *now!* You was always a good Actress; but, you know when we are not on the Stage—we come down from our Stilts, and talk in our own proper persons.—Why sure, you will not pretend to forget our Adventures at Colchester—or the affair of the blue Domino at Warwick?

(*Emily expresses the utmost Surprise.*)

Har. Dear Sir, nothing is more evident than that the man has mistaken this Lady for another person. I hope you'll permit us to go, without enduring more impertinence.

Mr. H. If he is mistaken——I dont know what to say—'tis a perplexing business. But, I wish you would be so kind as to answer the man, Madam.

Em. Astonishment has kept me silent until now Sir—and I must be silent in future;—I have not been taught to make Defences!

Enter GEORGE, *behind* JARVIS.

Jar. Dear Ma'am, why surely you have not forgot how often you have been my ROXANA, and I your ALEXANDER?

Geo. Hark ye, Sir!—Dare utter another Word to that Lady, and I'll be your Destruction;—leave the room, Rascal, this instant.

Mr. H. You are too hot, George. He shall stay;

and since things are gone so far, I'll sift the story thoroughly. If the young Gentlewoman is not what he represents her, she has nothing to fear.—Speak boldly; where did you last see that Lady?

Jus. Aye, speak boldly; give her a few more Circumstances—perhaps some of them may hit;—People on occasions of this sort want their Memories refreshed.

Geo. Surely, Sir, you cannot allow this—

Mr. H. I do allow, Sir—and, if you cant be silent, leave the room.

Jus. Aye, Sir, or else you'll be committed for Contempt of Court!—Now, for your Name, child, your Name, and that of your family?

Em. The Name of my Family—demanded on such an occasion—I think myself bound to conceal. My silence on that subject, hitherto, arose from a point of Delicacy, and that motive is now greatly strengthened. I refuse to discover a Name which my rash conduct may subject to temporary disgrace.

Jus. Oh—Oh!—the Proof's clear, for, she refuses to answer Interrogatories!

Geo. Sir, I *cannot* be a silent witness of these Insults.—Your presence, Lady Dinah, supports that Rascal, or he should feel the immediate Effects of my resentment.

Lady D. Your resentment will be unnecessary, Sir. If he is not supported by Truth—I shall take care that he is properly punished.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. A Gentleman, in a Coach and four, is at the Gates—his name is Morley.

Em. Ah!—'tis my Uncle!—Now, Sir, you will be satisfied concerning my Family—and I no longer dread his presence!

[*Exeunt* EMILY HARRIET *and* SERVANT.

Mr. D. (*to Lady D.*) Her Uncle, Lady Dinah! —What means all this? [*Exit.*

Lady D. Mean!—(Nothing—madness!—*Aside.*)

Jus. (*Aside.* The Niece of a man who keeps a Coach and four! What, Mistress Susan, *all* Invention!—sly Cupid blinded me, or I should have seen clearer.) How's all this—I must enquire—and— (*Going.*)

Geo. Stay Sir, we have not done with you yet; you have another Office yet to perform—what says your Oracle Burn to such a Fellow as this, Justice?

Jus. Aye, you rascal—'tis now your turn! Thou art a Vilifier, a Cheat, an Impostor!—'tis a downright Conspiracy.—The Niece of a man who keeps a Coach and four!—why how dost think to escape?—thou'lt cut a noble figure in the Pillory, Mr. Alexander the Great!

Jar. Sir—your honours—I humbly crave pardon for my mistake—the likeness is so strong I could have sworn the Lady had been my old acquaintance—but, I implore pardon;--my Lady!

Lady D. The dilemma into which you have deceived me excites my warmest Resentment. Expect no protection from me;—from this moment I discharge you from my Service.

Geo. Since your Ladyship gives him up, he has no protection—who's there?—(*Enter* SERVANTS.) Secure this fellow, until I have leisure to enquire into the Origin of this affair—he is only an Agent I am convinced!

Jar. Why, aye, Sir—(*Aside.* But I am dumb, or —we shall lose the reward!)—I implore your Honour! 'twas but a Mistake.

Geo. Away with him!

[*Exeunt* SERVANTS *with* JARVIS.

Lady D. (*Aside.* Ah! are you suspicious, Sir!— I hope Susan has not disobey'd me, and put me into Jarvis's power—I must be sure of that!) [*Exit.*

Jus. 'Tis a Conspiracy, that's certain—and will, I believe, come under *Scan Mag*—for 'tis a most scandal-

ous Libel!—But, let me see—it can be no Libel—for 'tis a *false* story—if it had been true—aye, then indeed—if it had been true!—but, I'll retire home to my Study, and (*Rubbing his forehead*) consult Burn without disturbance—and find out the meaning of what he says; you shall know it I warrant ye!

[*Exit, with his Clerk.*

Geo. Surely, surely she must have been privy to this infamous plot!—My Fate is at its Crisis—Mr. Morley's arrival determines it.—At this moment, my Fortitude forsakes me, I tremble to meet the man, on whose Caprice depends all my Interest in Existence! [*Exit.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I. AN APARTMENT.

Enter Mr. MORLEY *and* EMILY.

Mor. A pretty freak indeed! a pretty freak, in return for all the Care and Attention with which I have watched over you!—I have broke with the Doctor, for his share in this romantic affair.

Em. I am much concerned, Sir, that his Compassion on my distress should have led that worthy man to have taken any step that you can think unpardonable.• But, when he found that he could not move my Resolution, he thought it his Duty to provide me with a retreat amongst persons of reputation.

Mor.—A Retreat!—So, whilst I was condemning my sweet, innocent, niece for Stubborness, Wilfulness, and Ingratitude, she was only gone to a—Retreat! to sit I warrant ye under Elms, listen to the cawing of rooks, and carve her melancholy Story on the young bark.

Em. I am glad you can be so sportive with my unhappiness, Sir; where you jest with misery, you always design to lessen it.

Mor. Aye—that wont do. The Easiness of my Temper has been my misfortune; I never made a mistake in Trade in my life myself never—but, have been *persuaded*, and led to listen to *Advice*, until I

have been half ruined. But, I'll be resolute now, for your sake!

Em. Surely, Sir—

Mor. Aye, aye, I understand that speaking face—there is not a line in it but calls me cruel! But pray, Madam, what is it in Baldwin that so *particularly* displeases your Fancy?

Em. His person is ungraceful, his manner assuming, and his mind effeminate.

Mor. And is not this the description of four fifths of the young men of the age?—but, he has four thousand a year, that's not quite so common a circumstance.—Come, take the pencil again, lay on coarser colours, or you wont convince me, considering the Times, that the picture is a bad one.

Em. (*Aside.* Ah! if I could urge *his* merit, how different is Mr. Hargrave!)—You have heard my objections so often, Sir, that the repetition can have no weight. But, surely I may urge my Happiness.

Mor. Oh, I intend to secure that—therefore, John, order my Carriage up, we are going directly.—The very moment we reach Grosvenor Street, though you dont deserve it, the indissoluble tie with Baldwin must take place. He is now waiting with the Parson at his elbow; we'll away as quickly as if Cupid was our Coachman.—If you fancy that the horses are too quick, 'tis only to extend your fancy, and suppose that I hate Baldwin—that you are *therefore* driving to Scotland with him—and I pursuing; —why the horses will move so slowly, you'll be ready to swear they dont gallop above three rood an hour!

Em. I intreat you, Sir, stay—at least till to-morrow! —(*Aside.* Oh, where is Mr. Drummond?)

Mor. Not a moment!

Em. You have not yet seen Mr. Drummond, Sir, to whom I am so much obliged.

Mor. I have made enquiries, and have heard a very extraordinary Character of him; we can make him acknowledgments by Letter—and you may send him

Gloves.—I know your design, you hope he will be able to talk me out of my Resolution, and, perhaps I may be a little afraid of it myself; and so, to avoid that danger, we'll go directly.

Em. 'Tis so late, Sir; and the night is dark. (*Aside.* Yet, why should I wish to stay here!)

Mor. No more trifling! Conduct me to the family, that we may take leave. If you complain of this as an act of Tyranny in me, be comforted child—it is the last; to-morrow morning I shall be the most obedient of my dear Niece BALDWIN's humble servants. [*Exeunt.*

Enter GEORGE, *and* Sir CHARLES.

Geo. (*In great Agitation.*) To be reserved in Assistance at *such* a moment—talk to me of Prudence when I must be half frantic if I am human! Though he who can be discreet, as to his own Interest, when his Friend's happiness is at stake, may gain the approbation of his own Judgment—my Heart renounces him!—Where can Mr. Drummond be?

Sir Ch. I am at your Command in every thing—I ask you only to reflect.

Geo. Well! and what's the Result of reflection?—that, in a few hours, she will be irrecoverably another's—lost to me for ever!

Sir Ch. What, then, is your precise resolution?

Geo. There is but one way—she is on the very point of a precipice, from which, if I do not snatch her in an instant, nothing can retrieve her.—Let your carriage attend them, at some distance, with our Servants; we will follow on horseback;—I'll force her from this Tyrant Uncle, carry her instantly to Dover, and, in a few hours breathe at her feet in sweet Security in France.

Sir Ch. Considering that your plan is an *Impromptu*, I admire its Consistency.—But, my dear George, have you weighed *all* its Consequences?—your Father—

Geo. Will possibly disinherit me; be it so—I have six hundred a Year independent of his Will; and six hundred a year in France, with Emily Morley—Paradise!

Sir Ch. Pity the days of Chivalry are over, or, what Applause might'st thou not expect—adventurous Knight!

Geo. Come! we've not a moment to lose—let us get our people ready, to follow the instant the carriage sets out.

Sir Ch. But, George—I'll not accompany you a step after the Lady is under your care:—for, if your Father should suspect that I have any hand in the *enlevement*, I can hope for no Success when I ask for my charming Harriet!

Geo. Agreed—let me have your chaise, and leave me to my fortune—I will not endanger your happiness; this key will let you back at the garden door—you may give fifty reasons for your short absence.—Now, Cupid, Venus, Jupiter, and Juno—descend to our assistance! [*They hurry out.*

Enter Lady DINAH.

Lady D. She's gone! and my Alarms are at an end. After all, what passed in the garden was mere gallantry, and the effects of her Art; he suffered her Uncle to carry her off, with an abstinence that transports me;—it is plain I had never the least Foundation for my fears. How weak have I been, to allow my Credulity to be imposed upon, and my Temper ruffled, at a time when it was of so much importance to me—to have been serene!

Enter SUSAN.

Sus. Oh, my Lady!—she's gone! thanks to the delightful obstinacy of the old Uncle. It was well Mr. Drummond wasn't here, I was afraid—

Lady D. Your intrusive Joy wears a familiar aspect!—I know she's gone.

Sus. I beg pardon, my Lady—I thought I might congratulate your Ladyship on her being carried off. —I was terribly afraid—

Lady D. Yes, you have had fears sufficiently extraordinary! You ought to have known that the man—whom I had received as a Lover—could have felt passion, but for a moment, for such a girl as that!

Sus. (*Aside.* So! so! so! how soon our spirits are got up!) I'm sure, my Lady, 'twasn't I who caused the interview in the Wood to-day, which so enraged you, and confirmed your fears; you was ready enough then to believe all that was said against him!

Lady D. How! do you presume to reproach me with the Error into which you led me! by *your* fears I was governed, and not my own.—And your useless Plot, too, was as absurd as your fears.

Sus. Useless plot! my Lady, as to that, I am sure it was a good one—and would have sent her packing even though the Uncle had not come. 'Twasn't our fault he came. We have had the same trouble, and —Service is no Inheritance—and I hope your Ladyship will consider—

Lady D. How dare you think of a reward for implicating me in a scheme—not precisely submitted to my Discrimination!—If you obtain my Pardon, you ought to be highly gratified. Leave me, Insolent, this moment!

Sus. (*Muttering.*) Ha! do you venture to use me in this manner;—I am glad you have betrayed yourself, when I can yet take a severe Revenge!—However harmless the Plot which you instigated may have been to others—you shall find it mischievous enough to yourself!

Lady D. Stand not muttering there—retire from my Presence! (*Exit* SUSAN.) But—I have gone too far. —Now must I court my Servant! to forgive the re-

sentment which her assumptive Impertinence occasioned. Well; 'tis but for a short time—the Marriage over, and I have done with her! I must retire now, to recover my Composure.—Perhaps he'll visit me, but not to talk of Veneration and Respect again! —Oh, how I'll torment him for that, and his Adventure! nothing gives a woman such fine means of plaguing her Lover as an Affectation of Jealousy: if she actually feels it, she is his Slave; but, whilst she affects it—his Tyrant! [*Exit.*

Enter Bella *and* Harriet.

Har. How very unfortunate that Mr. Drummond is absent. He would have opposed the reasoning of Lady Dinah, and prevented their departure. Never any thing was so distressing!

Bel. Oh, there's no bearing it. Your Father is quite a manageable being, compared to this odd provoking mortal—whose imagined Flexibility withstands art, reason, every thing!

Har. Never shall I forget the Look which she gave me, wild, yet composed, agonized, though calm, as her Uncle led her out.—I wonder where Sir Charles is? he passed me in the Hall, saying, hastily, he must tear himself away for half an hour.

Bel. I wonder rather where your Brother is?—

Enter Sir Charles.

—oh, here's one of our truants, but where's the other? poor George I suppose is binding his brow with willows.

Sir Ch. That's not George's stile in love; he doesn't cross his arms, and talk to his shadow, when he may employ his hours to more advantage.

Bel. What do you mean?

Har. Where is my Brother!

Sir Ch. On the road to France.

Both. France!

Sir Ch. Unless Mr. Morley has as much Activity as obstinacy;—for George is in Advance of him, after having made Capture of his Niece.

Bel. Oh! how I doat on his Knight Errantry! He is the true Lover, who, instead of patiently submitting to circumstances, boldly seizes on Fortune, and governs the accidents which he cannot avoid.

Har. How can you praise such conduct, Bella? I, tremble for the Consequences!

Sir Ch. What consequences, Harriet, can alarm him, who snatches the woman he loves from the fate she dreads?

Enter SERVANT, *hastily.*

Serv. My Master is returned—the Lady fainted in the chaise—and he has brought her, by a cross-road, to Mr. Drummond's.

Sir Ch. Ruin!—is Mr. Drummond at home?

Serv. No Sir. And Mr. Morley is come back too; he drove through the gates this minute.

Bel. Then, George will lose her at last! he erred in not pursuing his route.

Sir Ch. He has no chance now, but through Mr. Drummond; and what can he hope from him, who has to combat the PASSIONS of three people, with no weapon but Reason!

Bel. There they are!—and Mr. Hargrave as loud as his Huntsman.

Har. Let us hurry to the parlour, and then we can send Intelligence of what passes to George!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

SCENE II.

ANOTHER APARTMENT.

Enter Mr. MORLEY *and Mr.* HARGRAVE.

Mor. Yes, yes, 'tis Fact, matter of Fact—upon my Credit! Your Son was actually the person who took her out of the coach!

Mr. H. Sir, it is impossible. My Son! why, he is under engagements that would make it madness.

Mor. Then Sir, you may depend upon it the Fit is on him now; for he clapt Emily into a chaise—whilst an impudent Puppy fasten'd on me. By Hercules! twenty years ago, I'd have given him sauce to his Cornish hug. *His* face I could not discern—but the other's I'll swear to.

Mr. H. George! look for George there! I'll convince you, Sir, instantly.

Enter HARRIET.

—where's George?

Harriet. Sir, my Brother is at Mr. Drummond's?

Mr. H. There! I knew it could not be George; though you would not be persuaded.

Mor. What a plague—you cant persuade me out of my Senses. Your Son, I aver, took her out of the coach—with her own consent no doubt—and on an honorable design without doubt—Sir, I give you Joy of your daughter.

Mr. H. Whether they live on their honour, or starve by it—not a single *sous* shall they have from me. But, I wont yet believe my George could be such a fool.

Mor. Fool! Sir—the man who loves Emily gives no proof of Folly either. But, she shall be punished

for her's. 'Twas a concerted affair, I see it plainly, all agreed upon—but she shall repent!

Mr. H. Your Resentment, Sir, is extremely extraordinary.—I must tell you that my Son's ancestry, or the Estate to which he is Heir, if he has not forfeited it by Disobedience, are not objects for the Contempt of any man.

Mor. They are objects to which I shall never be reconciled. What! have I been toiling these thirty years in Spain, to make my Niece a Match for any man in England, but to have her Fate determined by an adventure in a Post-Chaise; an evening's Frolic for a young Spark, who had nothing to do but to push the old fellow into a corner, and whisk off with the Girl? Sir, if there was not another man in the kingdom, your son should not have my consent to marry Emily.

Mr H. And if there was not another woman in England, I would suffer the name of Hargrave to be annihilated, rather than he should be husband to your Niece! [*They walk about in great Anger.*

Enter Mr. DRUMMOND.

Mr. D. Gone! Her Uncle been here, and the amiable girl gone! What Infatuation, Mr. Hargrave, could render you so blind to the happiness that awaited your family? I'll follow this obdurate man, —where's George—look for George there—

Mr. H. There, Sir, that's the person to whom you must address your complaints.

Mr. D. I have made discoveries of such a fraud practised upon you as must have shaken even *your* Prejudices—(*to Hargrave*). But this Uncle! surely, my dear Harriet, you might have prevailed.

Harriet. Sir, this Gentleman is Mr. Morley;—Mr. Drummond, Sir.

Mr. D. Ah! I beg pardon Sir, I am rejoiced to see you; I understood you were gone.

Mor. I was gone, Sir; but I was robbed of my Niece on the road; she was taken out of my coach, which forced me to return.

Mr. D. What—carried off?

Mr. H. Aye Sir, carried off by George, whom you have trained to such a knowledge of his Duty.

Mor. Stopped on the King's Highway, Sir, by the fiery youth, and my Niece dragg'd from my side.

Mr. D. Ah—ah!—admirable!

Mr. H. What's this right too? Human Patience wont bear this!

Mr. D. Where are they?

Harriet. At your house, Sir.

Mor. What a country am I returned to! Can a person of your Age and Character approve of—

Mr. H. Let George do what he will—he's sure of his Approbation.

Mr. D. Gentlemen, if you are sure Miss Morley is at my house, I am Patience itself—under all attacks!

Mor. Sir, I'm resolved to—

Enter Lady DINAH.

[*Exit Harriet, frightened.*

Lady D. So, Mr. Hargrave! So Sir! what your Son—this new Insult deprives me of Utterance!—Your Son! What is the Reason of this complicated outrage?

Mr. H. My dear Lady Dinah, I am as much enraged as you can be—but, he shall fulfil his Engagements—depend on it he shall.

Mor. Engagements! What the young Gentleman was engaged too!

Lady D. (*To Mr. Hargrave*) Your honour is concerned, Sir; if I was sure he was drawn in by the Girl's art, and that he was convinced of the Impropriety—

Mor. Drawn in by the Girl's Art! Whatever cause I may have to be offended with my Niece's conduct Madam, no person must speak of her with contempt in my presence. I presume this Gentleman's son was engaged to your Daughter; but that's not a sufficient reason for—

Lady D. Daughter!—No, Sir, 'twas to *me* that he was engaged;—and, but for the *Arts* of your Niece—

Mor. To you!—A matrimonial engagement between that Young Fellow and You! Nay then, I dont wonder at your Rage—a disappointment in Love, at your time of Life, must be the Devil.

Lady D. Mr. Hargrave, do you suffer me to be thus insulted?—

Mr. H. Why, my Lady, we must bear something from the Gentleman—the mistake we made about his Niece was a very awkward affair.

Mr. D. (*To Lady D.*) And, in consequence of that affair, I must now entreat you—without making it necessary for me to take upon myself a most disagreeable task—to retire from this family. If you compel me to explain myself—

Lady D. What new Insolence is this?

Mr. D. 'I would spare you, my Lady—but, you are not inclined to spare yourself. Blush then, whilst I accuse you of entering into a base league with your Servants, to drive an amiable young Lady from the protection of Mr. Hargrave's family!

Mr. H. (*Aside*) What!—in League with her servants?

Lady D. And, how dare you accuse me of this? am I to answer for my Servant's conduct!

Mr. D. Their wickedness I have lately learnt is but a natural result from the Principles with which you have disported yourself in poisoning their minds. Led from behind the protection of religion, they were left without support against Temptations to which, Madam, *you* know Philosophy opposes its shield in vain.

Lady D. (*Aside.* I feel his Superiority to my inmost Soul!—but, he shall not see his triumph)—Is it Virtue, Sir, that prompts *you* to induce Mr. Hargrave to break through every tie of honour—through the most solemn engagements!

Mr. D. I have just heard these convenient terms prostituted too by your Servants, as they reproached you with not keeping your Engagements to them.

Lady D. (*Aside*) Ah!—am I then betrayed?

Enter GEORGE, *leading* EMILY.

Geo. Miss Morley, Sir, commanded me to lead her to you. I cannot ask you to pardon a rashness of which I do not repent.

Mr. H. Then I shall make you, I fancy.

Mor. Ah! did you really insist on returning to me?

Em. I left Mr. Drummond's, Sir, the moment I knew you were here.

Mor. I'll not forget it. Come child, the coach is at the door, and we must make speed to retrieve our lost time. But, have a care, young Gentleman, though I pardon your extravagance once, a second attempt shall find me prepared for your reception.

Geo. If Miss Morley consents to go with you, Sir, you have no second attempt to fear. But,—(*to Emily*) in this Crisis of our Fate, I publicly intreat you to accept the eternal Love which I swear to you!

Mor. So, so, so! }
Mr. H. What, without my Leave! } *All together.*
Lady D. Amazing! }

Em. At such a moment as this, meanly to disguise my sentiments would be unworthy of the woman to whom you pay such a tribute. I therefore frankly confess that the only bar to my acceptance of your proferred Love is—the want of their Consent who have a right to dispose of us.

Mor. That you will not have frank Madam—so no more Ceremonies, but away.

[*Seizing her arm, and going off.*

Mr. D. Impenetrable man! I have discovered Sir, that your Niece is the Daughter of Major Morley—one of the earliest friends of my youth. He would not have inflicted the distress she now endures: I will be a Father to his Orphan family, and ensure the Felicity of two children on the point of being sacrificed to the Ambition and Avarice of those, on whose hearts nature has engraven Duties which they wilfully misunderstand.

Lady D. What! are you not content with the insults you have offered to me and Mr. Hargrave, but you must interfere with this Gentleman in the disposal of his Niece!

Mr. H. There's never any stopping him—he knows not how to value the Authority of a Parent.

Mr. D. But, I will show that I know how to perform its Duties! And, whilst you, *mistaken* men, condemn these to misery for Life, the Happiness they vainly claim from you—they shall receive from me. On Miss Morley I will settle the jointur'd land of my departed wife—and George shall now partake that Fortune, to which I have already made him Heir.

Mr. H. What can these Servants have told him, that makes him so warm? It is time that I should hear their tale! [*Exit, unperceived by Lady Dinah.*

Mor. Why, Sir, this is Friendship indeed! settle Estates!—I am glad Brother Tom had Prudence enough to form such a Connection—'twas seldom he minded the Main Chance;—instead of that, Honour and running after ragged colours with a greasy knapsack were—

Mr. D. Hold, Sir! I have served! and love the Profession. The Army is not more the school of Honour, than of every Generous Passion. A British Soldier is a fellow-citizen with the whole World;

he feels that every man of Character is his Friend and Brother—except in the moment in which he is the Enemy of his Sovereign; and, when his sword has made his foe his Captive, the Urbanity of his Heart—gains a willing Subject to his country!

Mor. Nay, if you have all this Romance, I dont wonder at your proposal.—However, though your Lands might have been necessary for Mr. Morley's Daughter—my Niece, if she marries with my consent, shall be obliged to no other man for a Fortune.

Lady D. The Insolence of making me witness all this—is become insupportable!—Is this you, Sir, who this very morning paid your Vows to me!

Geo. Your Pardon for the Error of the morning; I imagined myself paying my devoirs to a Lady who was to become—my Mother!

Lady D. Your Mother! Sir—your Mother!—Mr. Hargrave?—where is Mr. Hargrave?

Enter Mr. Hargrave.

Mr. H. I am here, my Lady—and have just heard a tale of so atrocious a nature from your servants, that I would not, for half my Estate, that such an affair should have happened in my family.

Lady D. And can you believe the Malice?

Mr. H. Indeed I do.

Lady D. Mr. Drummond's Arts have then succeeded!

Mr. H. Your arts have not my Lady, and you have no chance for a Husband now, I believe, unless you can prevail upon George—to make a Runaway match with *You!*

Lady D. Insolent Wretches!—Order my Equipage!—Beneath this *roof* I will not stay another moment. When Persons, of my Rank, thus condescend to mix with Plebeians—like a Phœnix that appears within the ken of common birds they are stared at

and flouted, till, to escape from the Insults of Ignorance and Envy, they are forced to ascend again to their proper region! [*Exit.*

As Lady Dinah goes off, GEORGE *fixes his eye on his Father; and points after her.*

Mr. H. (*catching George's hand*). My dear Boy, I believe we were wrong here, and I am heartily glad we have escaped. But, I suppose you'll forgive and forget, when I tell you I have no objection to your endeavouring to prevail on this Gentleman.

Geo. Nothing, dear Sir, can diminish the most unbounded Gratitude for the permission. Now—may I hope Sir—

Mor. Hope, Sir!—Upon my word I dont know what to say;—you have contrived to carry affairs to such a length, that asking my consent, I begin to perceive, is become but matter of Form.

Mr. H. I, for my part, begin to find out, Sir, that, in some cases, Children should lead. But—pray keep me in countenance, that I may'nt think I yielded too soon.

Mr. D. To become a very joyous Circle, your Consent, Sir, is all we want. Let us prevail upon you to permit your beloved Emily to receive the Addresses of my Godson, and, for many happy years hence, your Memory will recur to his boldness on the road, as the most fortunate rencontre of your life.—You shall come and live amongst us, and we will study to reconcile you to your native Country; amidst the degeneracy which may exist, we will find room enough to act virtuously, and in England to enjoy the Rewards of virtue—more securely than in any other part of the Earth.

Mor. Sir, I like you; promise me your Friendship, and you shall dispose of my Niece.

Mr. D. I accept the condition with pleasure.

Mor. Well—here I am—as usual—persuaded out of my resolution—a perfect proverb for Flexibility!

Geo. Oh, Sir, permit me——

Mor. Nay, indulge not in Joy too soon. Now you have got me on your side, Emily begins to feel her usual reluctance to a choice of mine—eh? what say you?

Em. The proof I have given of my sentiments, Sir, shows that in displaying reluctance I should make a vain attempt to disguise my feelings.

Geo. Enchanting Frankness! my heart, through life, will thank you.—But, what shall I say to you (*To Drummond*)—to you, Sir, to whom I already owe—

Mr. D. Nothing. The Heart, George, must have some Attachments—mine has for many years been center'd in you; if I have struggled for your happiness 'twas to gratify myself.

Geo. Oh, Sir, why will you continually excite feelings—to which you refuse Utterance?—Seymour, behold in me the happiest of men!

Sir Ch. May your Bliss, my dear George, be as permanent as it is great!—Allow me Sir (*to Mr. Hargrave*) to seize this propitious moment to ask your consent to a second union. I'll prove George's exclusive claim a vain boast—if you permit me to entreat Miss Hargrave for her hand.

Mr. H. Sir Charles, there was no moment in which I should not have heard this request with pleasure. Why, Harriet—I perceive no Anger in your eye at Sir Charles's request!

Har. Your Harriet, Sir, is spared the pain of feeling reluctance—to that which gives you so much pleasure!

Bel. Upon my word you look quite insulting with your happiness. I seem quite a deserted damsel amongst ye! But—I chance to have received a Letter, which informs me—that a certain person—

Geo. Of the name of—Belville—

Bel. Be quiet!—is landed at Dover, and posting hither—with all the saucy Confidence our Engagement inspires him with.

Mr. D. Say you so? Then we'll have all the Weddings celebrated in one day.

Bel. Oh, mercy!—I wont hear of it. To love may be endurable—but to honour! and obey! 'tis strange we never had Interest enough to get the ungallant Form mended.

Mr. D. The Vow, my dear Bella, in the Marriage Ceremony, was prudently introduced for common apprehensions. But Love—in refined minds—excites a train of sweet Attentions, which, without the Alloy of feeling that a mere Contract is performed, are bestowed with constant delight! May those who are entering on this state—You—and You (*to Bella significantly*) and You (*to the Audience*) possess the blissful envied lot of—Married Lovers!

EPILOGUE,

WRITTEN BY GARRICK.

Spoken by Bella.

Post haste from Italy arrives my Lover!
Shall I to you, good friends, my Fears discover?
Should Foreign Modes his virtues mar and mangle,
And *Caro Sposo* prove—Sir Dingle Dangle,
No sooner joined than separate we go,
Abroad, we never shall each other know,
At Home, I mope above—he'll pick his teeth below.
In sweet domestic Chat we ne'er shall mingle,
And, wedded though I am, shall still live single.
However modish, I detest this plan:
For me no maukish creature, weak and wan,
He must be English, and an english Man.
To Nature and his Country false and blind
Should Belville dare to twist his form and mind,
I will discard him: and, to Britain true,
A Briton chuse—and, may be, one of You!
Nay—dont be frighten'd—I am but in jest,
Free Men, in Love, or War, should ne'er be press'd.
If you would know my utmost expectation,
'Tis one unspoil'd by travell'd education;
With Knowledge, Taste, much Kindness, and some Whim,
Good Sense to govern me—and let me govern him:
Great love of me must keep his heart from roving,
Then I'll forgive him, if he proves too loving.
If, in these times, I should be bless'd by Fate
With such a Phœnix, such a matchless Mate,

I will by kindness, and some small discerning,
Take care that Hymen's torch continues burning—
At Weddings, now-a-days, the Torch thrown down
Just makes a smoke, then stinks throughout the town!
No married puritan, I'll follow pleasure
And e'en the Fashion—but, in moderate measure:
I will of Op'ra Extasies partake
Though I take Snuff to keep myself awake;
No rampant Plumes shall o'er my temples play
Foretelling that my Brains will fly away,
Nor from my head shall strange Vagaries spring
To show the soil can teem with every thing—
No *Fruits, Roots, Greens*, shall fill the ample space
A *Kitchen-Garden* to adorn my face!
No Rocks shall there be seen, no Windmill, Fountain,
Nor Curls, like Guns, set round to guard the Mountain!
Oh, learn ye Fair, if this same madness spreads,
Not to hold up—but, to keep down—your heads.
—Be not misled by strange fantastic art,
But, in your Dress let Nature take some part—
Her skill alone a lasting Power insures,
And best can ornament such Charms—as your's!

WHO'S THE DUPE?

A FARCE.

This Farce has been constantly before the Public since its first appearance in 1779; *it suggested itself to the Author's mind on reading a passage in which a sneer at the Inferiority of Women was carried too far. As a general Satire on mere Pedantry it is a* jeu' d'esprit *of a high order; in which, whilst the author indulges in a Woman's lively laugh at the mere* plod *of Learning in the Character of* GRADUS, *she gives, in old* DOILEY, *quite as vivid a reverse picture of disgusting vulgarity in an upstart citizen, from a total want of it. The piece disclaims the more exact attention to Probability which a regular play demands, and is, what a Farce ought to be, but a relaxation for the mind that seeks it. Her Greek and Latin she borrowed as she could, from her father, her husband, or her brothers.*

PROLOGUE.

In days of yore lived doughty Knights,
Enchanters, Squires, and valiant Wights,
Scamp'ring o'er Mountains, Seas, and Land,
Prompt, at their haughty Fair's Command.
Castles were razed, and Giants killed,
Volcanoes sunk, or Rivers filled.
No Slanderer dared stalk the Earth,
No faithless Lover turned to Mirth
The oaths that fondly once he swore—
Is he inconstant?—he's no more!

Rare times were these! Yet some there were
Who, even then, against the Fair,
Fearless of Conj'rer, Squire, or Knight,
Could show their teeth, and vent their spite.
These were your Learned Men—your Writers,
Whom no Age ever marked for Fighters;
But war with *Women* they could wage,
And fill their bold satiric page
With petty foibles—*Ladies'* faults,
Who still endure their rude Assaults.
For even now it is the way,
In this our *polished* modern day,
On female follies to be witty,
From the Court Beauty to the City.
Those who cant rhyme, in weighty prose
Their whims and vanity expose.
In Epigrams Sir Witling's Folio
Makes of the Sex a perfect Olio,

Of Noise Caprice and Pride composed,
To every thing *outré* disposed,
Whilst Cards, and Dress, and studied airs
More than good Housewifery or Prayers
Engross their time, their hearts, their cares.
Thus have they borne, from distant Ages,
The lash of Wit, the frown of sages;
Why then 'tis fair One Hour to give,
'Tis all she asks, a WOMAN leave
To laugh at those same *learned* men!
The Gall of whose sarcastic pen
'Gainst youth and beauty is supplied
Nor spares the Matron Maid or Bride.
Students! if you from musty Halls,
And the chill gloom of College walls,
To bask in pleasure's tempting ray,
Have, Phaeton like, obtained a day,
And, throned in yonder circle, sit
Deciding on the claims of Wit,
Think not that YOU our author means
To rally in her farcic Scenes;
A PEDANT she has dared to scan
From ALMA MATER spick and span,
And You, for Laughter on the beat,
Will roasted SQUARE-CAPS deem a treat!

CHARACTERS.

MEN.

DOILEY.	—	—	—	—	*Mr. Parsons.*
GRADUS.	—	—	—	—	*Mr. King.*
GRANGER.	—	—	—	—	*Mr. Palmer.*
SANDFORD.	—	—	—	—	*Mr. Aikin.*

WOMEN.

MISS DOILEY.		—	—	—	*Mrs. Brereton.*
CHARLOTTE.	—	—	—	—	*Mrs. Wrighten.*

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WHO'S THE DUPE?

A FARCE.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I. THE PARK.

FLOWER GIRLS, *and several persons, passing.*

First Girl. I vow I ha'n't had a Customer to day! Summer is coming, and we shall be ruined. When flowers come plenty and cheap—nobody will buy 'em.

2d. Girl. Aye, very true—people talks of Summer! for my part, give me Winter. In a hard Frost, or a deep Snow, who's dress'd without Flowers with Furs?—Here's one of the Captains—

Enter SANDFORD.

Flowers Sir?

Sand. I have no Silver.

2d. Girl. Bless your Honor! I'll take Gold.

Sand. Indeed!

2d. Girl. Here's Hyacinths, and a sprig of Myrtle.

Sand. I'd rather have Roses. How much will you take for these? (*Pinching her cheek.*) Will you warrant them?

2d. Girl. Oh Sir, they must be taken—"for better for worse"—according to Law, if taken at all.

Enter GRANGER.

Sand. Ah! Granger by all that's fortunate! I dispatched a Letter for you last night into Devonshire, to hasten your return.

Grang. Then your letter carriers and I jostled each other, near one this morning, the other side Hounslow. My Postilion—nodding I suppose in his dreams at some *Greasælinda*—ran against the Mail and tore off my hind wheel. I was forced to mount a one-eyed hack, and with such curious equipage arrived at three this morning.

Sand. But, how has the negociation with your Brother ended? Will he put you into a situation to—

Grang. "Yes, to take a Heat with the Gentoos. He'll speak to Sir Jacob Jaghire to get me a Commission in the East Indies—and (*mimicking*) every body grows rich there—and you are a Soldier already—you can fight!"

Sand. Well, what answer did you give?

Grang. "Yes, I can fight, but I can't grow rich there upon the mere smell of Gunpowder. Your true East India Soldier is a Variety of the Genus of those that strewed Minden with Frenchmen.—With Capital to trade with, he must have as great fecundity of Character as a Dutch Burgomaster. Whilst his Sword is in his hand—his Pen must be in his Cockade; he must be as expert at Fractions, as at Assaults. To-day cutting down ranks of soft beings just [illegible] from their embroidery—tomorrow casting up pepper and beetle nut; this hour, a Son of Mars

—heaping up the slain; the next, an Auctioneer—knocking down chintz to the best bidder!"

Sand. And thus your negociation ended.

Grang. Oh, I had to listen to a *very* wise dissertation about *running out*, as he calls it,—"Five thousand! (*mimicking*)—enough for any younger son—but the Prodigal." Really I can't see how I could help it. Jack Spiller to be sure had twelve hundred; the fellow was honest, and would have paid, but he married a Fine Lady—so died Insolvent. It was not the only accident, of the kind, that occurred to me—the purchase of my Captaincy too—the necessary expences in my last Campaign—and the Distresses of my fellow soldiers, have swallowed the rest.

Sand. Poor Granger! So, with a Spirit to do Honour to Five Thousand a Year—thou art not now worth five shillings!

Grang. *C'est vrai.* Should the affair with my dear Miss Doiley be cross'd—I am the most undone dog on Earth!

Sand. What then, under all circumstances—to a Friend I suppose you will frankly confess—that her Fortune is *nearly* as much your object as Herself.

Grang. Why look ye Sandford—I am not one of those sighing milksops who could live in a Cottage on Love, or sit contentedly under a hedge and help my wife to knit stockings; but, on the word of a Soldier! I would rather marry Elizabeth Doiley with Twenty, than any other woman on earth with a hundred, Thousand.

Sand. And the woman must be very unreasonable who would not be satisfied with such a distinction. But Elizabeth's Father, as my Letter would have informed you, has taken the Liberty to chuse a Son-in-Law—without your Permission!

Grang. Ah! a Lover! That then is the Secret she hinted, and that brought me so hastily to Town;—who—what—is he?

Sand. Why—every thing that you are not!

Grang. Pshaw!—such a mixture of jest and earnest puzzles.

Sand. Why—that he should be your Contrast, and yet not succeed with the Lady, is rather a puzzler to be sure! However, since they became my Neighbours in Surrey, I am in the Secrets of the whole family, and, for your sake, have cultivated an intimacy with Abraham Doiley—CITIZEN AND SLOP-SELLER! In a word, the Father consults me, the Daughter complains to me, and the Cousin romps with me—can my Importance be encreased?

Grang. My dear Sandford—the Lover!

Sand. My dear Granger! the sum total is this: Old Doiley, himself bred in a Public Seminary, but that being unfortunately only a common parish Charity School, is determined to have a man of downright LARNING for his Son. This Caprice makes him regardless of Fortune; but, Elizabeth's husband must have Latin at his finger's ends, and be able to teach his Grandsons to sputter in Greek. So one Gradus is invited from Oxford, will arrivé in Town this Evening, and is to have his first Interview to-morrow.

Grang. Oh! I'll re-study my Greek, or write Odes in Chaldee, if that will content him—but, may I perish if all the Pedants in England, with the Universities to back them, shall rob me of my Elizabeth! See here (*producing a Letter*) an invitation from her own dear hand! This morning, this very hour—in a moment! I shall be at her feet. Go with me down the Park (*they go off, arm in arm*)—oh, quicker, I cry you mercy! we must not walk, but fly! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

AN APARTMENT AT MR. DOILEY'S.

Mr. and Miss Doiley *at Breakfast.*

Doil. Here take away—take away. Remember we're not at home to nobody but Mr. Gradus.

Serv. The formal gentleman that was here last night, Sir?

Doil. Yes! (*snappishly.*) the Gentleman that was here last night. (*Exit Servant.*) What, I see you are determined for to have poor Gradus's heart Elizabeth! I never saw you so tricked out in a Morning before. But he isn't none of your Chaps that's to be catch'd with Knots and Gew-gaws—no, no! You must mind your P's and your Q's with him I can tell you. (*Miss Doiley laughs*)—And, pray now, dont laugh when he's with you. Betty, my Love, you've a confounding knack at laughing; and there's nothing so galling, to a man who studies to be wise, as a great Laugher.

Miss D. Oh!—the very Idea of him is as reviving as burnt feathers in hysterics! (*laughs*) I wish I had seen him last night, with the undisturbed rough rust of Oxford upon him! he must have been the greatest provocative to mirth—

Doil. How! What! a provokive to mirth! why, Hussey! he was recommended to me as a most desirable match by an antiquated Doctor of the Royal Society. He has finished his Larning some time—and they wanted him to go and drink, and hunt, in Shropshire—not he—he sticks to Al-Mater; and the College-Heads have been wisely laid together, many a time, to know whether he shall be a great Judge—a larned Physician—or a Civility Doctor—

Miss D. Nay then Sir—after all this, laughing will be irresistible!

Doil. Dont put me in a Passion, Betty!—dont go for to put me in a Passion. What—would you have a man with an etarnal bright Grin upon his face, like the head of a brass knocker—and hopping and skipping about, like a dutch doll with quicksilver in its heels? If you must have a husband of that sort, so be it—so be it—none of my Silver nor Gold for him!

Miss D. Surely, Sir, a man, instead of moving as if-cut in Wood, and speaking, as though he delivered his words by tale, should have Manners—and—

Doil. May be—may be; but your man of Manners is not fit for old Doiley's Son! What! shall I go for to give the labour of forty years to some young Jackanapes, who'll come into the room with a Dancing-school step—and prate of his Grandfather Sir Thomas, his Great-Grand-father the General, and his Great-Great-Great-Grandfather—merely because I cant very well tell whether I ever had one or no?

Miss D. I hope Sir that such a Man could never engage my—

Doil. Pshaw! Pshaw! You cant pretend to judge—they are all—all—Hypocrites and Deceivers!

Miss D. What then perhaps Mr. Gradus—

Doil. Oh—He! He's very different from your men of Manners I assure you!—the most extraordinary youth that was ever turned out of his College. None of your randans—up all night drinking—no, in his room, poring, and reading, and studying.—Oh, the Joy that I shall have in hearing him talk!—I do love Larning! Oh Betty—I was grieved—grieved to the Soul, when thou wert born—I had set my Heart upon a Boy! If thou'd'st been a Boy, thou should'st have had Greek, and Algebray, and Jometry, enough for an Archbishop!

Miss D. I am very sorry—Sir—

Doil. No, no—dont be sorry—be obedient, and all will be as it should be. You know I doat on you, you young Hussey.—Didn't I leave Eastcheap for Westminster on purpose to please you? Hav'n't I

carried you to Bath, to Brimmigem, and to the Camp, and all the genteel places? I never grudge you no expense, nor no pleasure whatsomever.

Miss D. Indeed, Sir, you are most indulgent—

Doil. Yes—but then I dont like to be thwarted! —dont go for to thwart me, that's all. Since you came into the world, and disappointed your Father of a Son to study Larning—'tis your duty to give him a larned Son-in-Law to make up his loss.

Enter CHARLOTTE.

Char. Elizabeth!—Mrs. Taffety, the Mantua Maker, I was desired to tell you, is in your sitting room.

Doil. Then send her away.—She hasn't no time now for Mrs. Taffety.

Miss D. Aye, send her away Cousin Charlotte—what does she want? I didn't send for her!

Char. (*Apart.*) Nonsense!—'tis the Captain.

Miss D. Oh! Yes—I—aye—perhaps she has brought the painted Lutestring!

Doil. Bid her come again tomorrow, I say!

Char. Oh dear Sir—such Mantua Makers as Mrs. Taffety, wont wait half a dozen times upon people. Why Sir—she comes to her customers in a Chair of her own; and her footman beats a Tattoo at the door, as if she was a Countess.

Doil. A Mantua-Maker, with her Footman and Chair!—I should as soon have expected a Dutchess in a wheel-barrow!

Miss D. Pray, Sir, allow me just to step to my room—I'd give the World were you as much charmed with the call as I am!

Doil. Coaxing Slut! (*Exeunt Miss D. and Charlotte.*) Where the dickens can Gradus be?—Well, good fortune never comes in a hurry.—If I'd pitch'd upon your man of Manners, he'd by this time have sipt his Jocklate, kiss'd Elizabeth's fingers, hopped into his carriage, and away to his cronies, to divert

them with Caratures of the Old Fellow and his Daughter! Before I'd give my Gains to one of these Puppies, I'd spend them all in building hospitals, for lazy lacquies, and decayed beaus.

SCENE III.

ANOTHER APARTMENT.

Miss DOILEY *and* GRANGER.

Miss D. A Truce to Compliments! Perhaps I am too much inclined to believe all you can swear. But this must be a moment of business—to secure me to yourself, are you willing to enter into Schemes that—

Grang. Oh!—I'll have a chaise at the Park Gate in five minutes! and, we'll be in Scotland, my Elizabeth, before your new Lover has determined on the Stile of his first Address to you.

Miss D. Pho, Pho! you're a mere bungler at contrivances; if you'll be guided by me, my Father shall give me to you at St. James's church, in the face of the World.

Grang. Indeed!

Miss D. Indeed.

Grang. I fear to trust to it my Angel. Beauty can work miracles with all mankind, except an obstinate father.

Miss D. *You* must work the miracle. I have settled the whole Scheme with my Cousin, who has Understanding and Wit—all I expect in you (*archly*) is Obedience.

Grang. You Rogue! But, my Lesson—my Lesson!

Miss D. Why luckily, you know my father has never seen you—he left Bath before you had the sauciness—

Enter CHARLOTTE—*with two bundles.*

Char. There!—you're finely caught! Your Father and Mr. Gradus are actually upon the stairs.

Grang. Destruction!—put me into a closet.

Miss D. Oh!—there is none—I shall faint with Terror!

Grang. No cloths-press? No back stairs?

Char. Neither, neither—But here—I am your guardian angel (*untying one of the bundles.*) As they suppose Mrs. Taffety is here, without ceremony on with this Pellice and Handkerchief.—Speak broken english and, my life on it, you'll pass muster with my Uncle.

Grang. What! make a woman of me—by Jupiter—

Char. Lay your Commands on him. If he does not submit we are ruined!

Miss D. Oh—you shall! I insist upon it—here—I'll hide him in his close Bonnet and Veil. (*puts them on.*)

Doil. (*without*) This way Mr. Gradus—come this way—we'll take her by Surprise—least preparation the best (*rattling the door*) Open the door!

Miss D. Presently, Sir.

Doil. (*rapping*) Why the dickens are you so long?—open the door!

Char. In a moment; I'm only pinning on a Dress. You hurry so—you have made me scratch my finger!—Good Woman, here is your work in the other bundle.—There, now you may enter.

[*Exit Charlotte.*

Enter DOILEY *with* GRADUS, *in a dingy black formal square-cut dress, his Hair dressed in an extremely old fashioned manner. Granger remains quiet, at the back of the stage, arranging his bundle.*

Doil. Oh—only my Daughter's Mantua-Maker.

Here is that Mr. Gradus, Elizabeth, I talked to you about. Bless me—I hope you a'n't ill—you look as white as a Candle.

Miss D. No, Sir,—not ill—but this person has made my dress out of all Shape I believe! (*looking at Granger.*)

Doil. Why then make her pay for it, d'ye hear? It's my belief if she was to pay for all she spoils, she'd soon drop her Chair and trudge a-foot. Mr. Gradus—beg pardon—this is my Daughter—dont think the worse of her because you see her a little dash'd or so.

Gradus. (*With the most solemn gravity.*) Bashfulness, Mr. Doiley, is the robe of Modesty; and Modesty, as hath been well observed, is a Sunbeam to a Diamond —giving force to its beauty, and exalting its Lustre.

Doil. He was a deep one, I warrant him, that said that—I remember something like it in the Wisdom of Solomon. Come, speak to Elizabeth there; I see, she's so fluster'd, she wont till you've broke the ice.

Grad. Madam—(*bows*)—hem—h-r-r-m. Permit me this honour—hem! Believe me Lady (*slowly and solemnly*) more satisfaction I have in beholding you, than I should have in conversing with Grævius and Gronovius. I had rather possess your approbation than that of the Elder Scaliger; and this apartment is more precious to me—than was the Lyceum Portico to the most zealous of the Peripatetics!

Doil. (*Aside.*) There!—Shew me a man of Manners who could talk so.

Grang. (*Advances speaking in a shrill tone*) Pardie, Madame! Is dis de *Gentilhomme* on whose account you vil vant Bride-cloaths? Vy, he speak like von *Dictionaire* Maker, and look like von Physicienne!

Doil. Hold *your* tongue Mrs. Skain-of-Silk! What the dickens—dont you mend nor make here.—Why dont you pack her off! (*to Miss D.*)

Miss D. Make haste, Mrs. Taffety;—dont you venture to speak again! (*he returns and remains,*

quite quiet, at the back, tying up his bundle.)—I believe all you said just now to be very fine, Sir; but, your literary skill has displayed itself—in uttering what the person you address cant comprehend. Unfortunately I dont know the Gentlemen you mentioned. The education given to Women shuts us entirely out from such refined acquaintance.

Grad. Perfectly right, Madam, perfectly right. The more simple your education, the nearer you approach the pure manners of the purest ages. The Charms of women were never more powerful—never inspired such Atchievements, as in those immortal periods when—they could neither read, or write.

Doil. Neither read or write! Zooks—what a fine time was that for to bring up a Daughter! Why—a peeress in those days did not cost so much as a Barber's daughter in our's. Miss Friz must have her Dancing—her French—her Jography—her Stronomy—her Harpsicholl—her Penny-forty—whilst her Father, to support all this, lives upon Sprats; or, once in two years, calls his Creditors to a Composition.

Grad. —O tempora mutantur! But these exuberances, Mr. Doiley, indigitate unbounded Liberty.

Doil. Digitate, or not—ifackens, if the Ladies would take my advice, to distinguish themselves from their present imitators—they'd return to their Distaffs, and grow notable.

Grad. Ah!—It was at the Loom, and the Spinning wheel, that the LUCRETIAS and PORTIAS of the world imbibed their Virtue; that the mothers of the GRACCHI, the HORATII, the ANTONINI, caught that sacred flame with which they inspired their sons, and gave them that Fortitude, that Magnanimity, which made them Conquerors and Kings!

Grang. (*Advances, speaking in a shrill tone*) Vy, *Monsieur*—you make von good *Docteur de Sorbonne*—but Husband!—you marry dis pretty Ladee! (*follows Gradus, who retreats round the stage*) de Town vil laugh—de vorld vil—

Grad. Prithee good woman!—Mr. Doiley, I am really—

Doil. Hoity, toity! (*in a violent rage*)—in all my life I never saw so much! Why you slovenly—insolent—insignificant—paltry—french—

Grang. No paltry french me, *Monsieur!* 'tis insult to my Countree—and mon Cousin de *Friseur* shall give you de Challenge!

Doil. Challenge! what the dickens are you coming the Mad Marquis over us?—March! Madam—troop I say! It doesn't signify hanging back woman—out you shall! (*pushes him out; and bawls after him*) If ever I catch you at my Door again, you—and your Chair—shall be jirk'd into the Kennel together! This comes of your employing your *Parlour voos.*

Grang. Be not, Mr. Doiley, disconcerted—Wonder and Rudeness are the birthright of the Ignorant.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Sir, here's a Lord!—Lord Pharo.

Doil. (*Aside.*) Lord Pharo—h-r-r-m, then the four Aces ran against him last night. Well, the Distresses of some make my money encrease as much as the Luxuries of others!

Serv. Sir—he seems hurried—

Doil. Oh I'm coming.—When a Lord wants Money he'll wait as patiently as any body! Well, Mr. Gradus—I'm your humble sarvant. Elizabeth!—you understand me. [*Exit.*

Miss D. (*Aside.*) Now, to work as wonderful a Metamorphosis as any in his Ovid!

Grad. How unlucky the old gentleman should be called away! Hem! (*preparing to speak to her*) There is something in her eye so sarcastic that I'd rather pronounce the *Terræ filius* than address her. Madam——What can I say? (*puts his hands into his pockets*)—that's fortunate (*pulling out some papers*) Hem—I—I will venture to request your Ideas,

Madam, on a little Autographon, which I design for the World.

Miss D. - - -Sir!

Grad. In which (*with an air of Importance*) I have found a new Chronometer, to prove that Confucius and Zoroaster were the same person;—and that the Pyramids are not so ancient, by forty years, as the world believes.

Miss D. To what Purpose Sir!

Grad. Purpose!—Purpose—Why, really Miss, Bookseller's shelves are loaded with volumes in the unattractive lines of hum-drum plain Sense; and, unless an Author can elance from the common track, he stands as little chance to be looked at—as a comet in its Aphelion. Pray Ma'am indulge your Curiosity!

Miss D. You may as well, Sir, offer me a sheet of Hieroglyphics,—besides, I hate reading!

Grad. Hate reading!

Miss D. Aye, to be sure; what's reading fit for—but to give a stiff, embarrassed, air? It makes a man move, as if made by a Carpenter who had forgot to give him joints (*observing his action*)—he twirls his hat—and bites his thumb—whilst his hearers, his beholders I mean, are gaping for his Wit!

Grad. (*Aside*) The malicious creature! 'tis my picture she has been drawing,—'tis more impossible for me to speak than ever.

Miss D. For my part, if I were a man, I'd study only Dancing and *Bon Mots.* With no other Learning than these, he may be light and frolicksome as Lady Airy's ponies—but, loaded with Greek, Philosophy, and Mathematics, he's as dull and as heavy as a Cart Horse.

Grad. (*Aside.*) *Fœmina cum voce Diaboli!*

Miss D. Why—why are you silent, Sir? I never saw such a Lover in my life! By this time you should have said fifty brilliant things—found an hundred Similies for my eyes, complexion, and wit. Can Me-

mory furnish you with nothing pat?—No Poetry—no Heroics? On what subject did Portia's Lovers entertain her, whilst she sat spinning—eh?

Grad. The Lovers of that age, Madam, were ignorant of frothy Compliment. Instead of being gallant, they were brave; instead of flattery—they studied Virtue and Wisdom. These, Madam, nerved the Roman arm, empowered her to drag the Nations of the world at her chariot wheels, and raised her to such an exalted height, that—

Miss D. That—down she tumbled in the dust—and there I beg you'll leave her. Was ever any thing so monstrous? I ask for a Compliment to myself—and you begin a Eulogium on a parcel of starch warriors and formal Pedants! Why, Sir, there is not one of these brave, wise, godlike men, that would not appear as ridiculous in a modern Assembly,—as a Judge in his long Wig amongst maccaroni Jackets.

Grad. (*Aside.*) Now—I am dumb again. Oh! that I had you at Brazen-nose, Madam! I could manage then!

Miss D. What! Now you are in the Pouts Sir? What a cheerful life a Wife must have with such a being! always either in profound silence, or else talking Sentences—why dont you learn to converse! No delightful nonsense, no sweet trifling—all must be solemn, wise, and grave! I would as soon marry the Bust of Seneca in bronze, for then I should have all the *sombre* gravity of wisdom—without its tediousness.

Grad. The Tediousness of Wisdom! Surely, Madam, or I am deceived, you possess a mind capable—

Miss D. Now I see, by the twist of your chin Sir, that you are beginning another Oration—but, I protest, I will never hear you speak again, till you have foresworn those Tones, and that Manner. Go, Sir—throw your books into the fire; turn your Study into a Dressing-room, hire a Dancing-master—and, grow, agreeable!—(*Aside.* That you may disgust my

poor Father!—Now my Ally shall be brought up in aid!) [*Exit.*

Grad. Plato! Aristotle! Zeno!—I abjure ye. A Girl, bred in a Nursery! in whose soul the sacred lamp of knowledge hath scarcely shed its faintest rays, hath vanquished and struck dumb the most faithful of your disciples!—

Enter CHARLOTTE.

here's another She-Imp, I'd as soon encounter a She-Wolf. [*Going.*

Char. Stay Sir! pray an instant—am I such a scarecrow? I was never run from by a young man before in my life! [*Pulls him back.*

Grad. I resolve henceforth to run from your whole sex.—Youth and Beauty, are only other names for Coquetry and Affectation. Let me go Madam. Let me fly from you, for *you* have Beauty, and doubtless all the Blandishments that belong to it.

Char. Well—I declare you have a mighty pretty way of bestowing the compliment *indirect* on a Lady! Miss Doiley might have discerned something in you worth cherishing—in spite of that sad Husk of Scholarship.—To pass one's life with such a Being, seems to me the very Apex of human Felicity. (*Aside.* I found *Apex* for him in a book of Geometry this morning!)

Grad. Do you intend that I should think you serious?

Char. Positively. I was in ambush and listened to your conversation, and I cant help being concerned that you, by mismanagement, should bring yourself within the reach of ridicule—though possessed of Talents which should do you Honour.

Grad. (*Aside*—This creature is of a Genus quite different from the other—she has understanding and Discernment!) I begin to suspect, Madam, that,

though I have some knowledge, I have still much to learn.

Char. You have indeed! Knowledge, as you manage it, is a downright *Bore.*

Grad. Boar! Why what relation, Madam, can there be between Knowledge and a Hog?

Char. How ridiculous! You have spent your life in learning the dead languages, until you are ignorant of the living.—Why, Sir, such words as *Bore*—are all the *Ton.*

Grad. Ton! Ton! What may that be? It cannot be Orthology: I dont recollect its root in the Parent languages.

Char. Ha! ha! ha!—better and better! Why, Sir, *Ton* means—*Ton* is—Pho! what signifies where the Root is? Such words are the Short-hand of Conversation, and convey whole sentences at once;—all that delights the Town is *Ton*, and all that disgusts is *Bore.*

Grad. And is that divine Medium, which pourtrays the mind, and makes us first in the animal Climax—is SPEECH become so arbitrary that—

Char. Divine Medium! Animal Climax! (*contemptously*) You know very well that the use of Language is—to express one's Likes and Dislikes; and a Pig will do this as effectually by its Squeak, or a Hen with her Cackle, as you—with your Latin and Greek!

Grad. What can I say to you!

Char. Nothing;—but, yield yourself to my Guidance, and then try if you can conquer Miss Doiley. (*Aside.* And lose her Father in the attempt!)

Grad. Conquer her! She is so incased in ridicule that she is invulnerable.

Char. Pshaw, pshaw! How can Ridicule be exerted—after you shall have banished your Absurdities? One can no more exist without the other—than the mundane System without Air. (*Aside.*—There's a touch of Science for him!)

Grad. Madam I'll take you for my Minerva—Protect me with your shield—and lead me to Battle!

Char. Enough!—In the first place (*leading him to a Glass at the side*) dont you think your armour for the campaign is—*à la mode d'Amour?* Did you ever see a Cupid in such a head dress! curled as stiffly as Sir Cloudsley Shovel's in the Abbey.—A dingy square-cut black coat, with horn buttons, to be sure speaks an excellent Taste! I would advise you to present it to some Parish Clerk to be worn at a Christening, and here's Cambrick enough in your ruffles to make the child a shirt.

Grad. I perceive my Error! The votaries of Love commence a new childhood; and Dignity would be as unbecoming in them, as a hornpipe to a Socrates. —But, Habit is so strong!—to gain an Empress I could not assume that careless air, that promptness of Expression, that—

Char. Then you may give up the pursuit of Miss Doiley;—for such a wise piece of formality would stand as good a chance of being made armour bearer to Cupid, as her Husband.

Grad. It is Mr. Doiley who will—

Char. Mr. Doiley! Ridiculous.—Depend on it he'll let her marry just whom she will.—This Mr. Gradus, says he,—why I dont care a Groat whether you marry him or not—there are fifty Fellows at Oxford who can talk Greek as well as he—

Grad. Indeed!

Char. I have heard a good account of the young man, says he. But all I ask of you is, to receive *two* Visits from him—no more than *two* visits! If you dont like him—so; if you do, I'll give you half my fortune on the day of marriage, and the rest at my death.

Grad. How niggard of Opportunity! Limit me to two visits!—one is already past, and she hates me—What can I expect from the other?

Char. It is a *Moment* that decides the Fate

of a Lover. Now fancy me Miss Doiley!—look at me, as if your Soul was in your eyes—swear I'm a divinity—then take my hand, and press it—thus.

Grad. Oh! the touch has thrill'd me.

Char. And, if I should pout, and resent the liberty—make your apology on my cheek (*Gradus hesitates, then salutes her*) So, so! you have spirit I perceive.

Grad. Can you bestow any lessons again on me?

Char. Yes; I have a friend—Mr. Sandford, whom you saw here last night;—you shall dine with him. He and his company will initiate you at once into the fashionable Rage, and teach you to trifle agreeably. You shall be equipped by him to appear this evening—as a Man of the World!—Farewell to Pedantry!

Grad. But what will the Father think of such a Metamorphosis?

Char. Study your Mistress—only; your visit will be to her, and that visit—depend upon it—decides your Fate! Resolve to take up your new Character boldly—in all its very strongest lines—or, at once to give up one of the largest fortunes in the kingdom.

Grad. My obligations, Madam—

Char. Dont stay now, to run the risk of meeting Mr. Doiley with his Daughter before you are properly prepared and reconciled to her, or Sandford the Dinner and the Plot will be worth no more to us, than your Gravity—away! [*Exit Gradus.*

Enter Miss DOILEY.

Miss D. Excellent Charlotte! you've outgone my Expectations. Did a Hare ever run so blindly into a snare!

Char. Oh, that's the way of your mere great Scholars; like other Labourers, they are fit for nothing—but in their particular Line. Take them but an inch

out of their beaten Track—they are bewilder'd instantly, and obliged to accept the first Guide that offers.

Miss D. Ha, Ha! But, have you seen Sandford? Is every thing in Train? Are they confident that they shall hoodwink him?

Char. Hoodwink! Why, dont you see he's already stark blind? Or, if he has eyes—I assure you they are for me! if you should alter your mind, I shall be a dangerous Rival now!

Miss D. My heart palpitates with apprehension! we shall never succeed!

Char. Oh, if you'll metamorphose Granger the Soldier, I'll translate the Scholar. Mr. Sandford has engaged half a dozen of the *Savoir vivre*, all in high Spirits, and determined to exhaust Wit and Invention, to turn our Solon out of their hands precisely the finished Coxcomb that will disgust your Father.

Miss D. Fortune crown their labours! My Granger is gone to study his Rival, and will make, I hope, a tolerable Copy. Tell Sandford, my dear Charlotte, to take care that Gradus has just Champaign enough to make him vibrate from his former character without going too far to be able to support his new one. [*Exeunt, different sides.*

ACT

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I. AN APARTMENT.

A Table and Bottles &c. DOILEY, *asleep.*

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Sir! Sir! (*jogging him*) Sir! What a doze! Sure my master has drain'd the bottles, he sleeps so sound.—Oh, no—(*pours out a Glass*) Here's to you, old Gentleman! Can't think why they sent me to wake thee—I'm sure when you're a snoring, you disturb the house less than at any other time!

[*Drinks, then awakens him.*

Doil. Hey!—how!—what! is Mr. Gradus come?

Serv. No, Sir, there's no formal Gentleman come; but Mr. Sandford's above stairs, and a mortal fine Gentleman came with him.

Doil. Aye—some Spendthrift, I suppose, that wants to sell an Annuity. Why, Gradus should have come just at this very time—past eight! (*Looking at his Watch.*)

Serv. His friends keep the Gentleman over a bottle, mayhap, Sir—longer than he thought for.

Doil. He over a Bottle! more liker over some crabbed book—or looking at the Moon through a *Microscope*, to see what she's about. Come, move

the things; and empty them two bottoms into one Bottle, and cork up close—d'ye hear. I wish Gradus was come—I must go and see. Well, if I succeed in this one point I'll put ill luck at Defiance. Let the world go to Loggerheads, grass grow upon Change, land-tax mount up, Master Doiley is snug! Doiley, with a hundred Thousand in Annuities, and a Son in Law as wise as a Chancellor, may bid defiance to wind and weather. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

A DRAWING ROOM.

Enter GRADUS, *led by* CHARLOTTE, *and followed by* SANDFORD.

Char. Well, I protest this is excellent! Why what with sattins and tassels and spangles and foils, you look as brilliant as a Chemist's shop by Candle-Light.

Grad. Madam, do you approve—

Char. I am all amazement—I'll run and send Miss Doiley to admire you. [*Exit.*

Grad. (*Looking in a Glass*) Oh, if our Proctor could now behold me! he would never believe that figure to be Jeremy Gradus. Between the Dazzle and the Champaigne, I dont know whether it is myself I see or not. What must I do with this?

Sand. Your *chapeau bras* - - - wear it thus. These hats are only for the Arm.

Grad. A hat for the Arm! what a subversion of ideas! Oh, Mr. Sandford—if the sumptuary laws of Lycurgus—

Sand. Murder! will you never leave off your College Cant? You must forget that such fellows ever existed—and that there was ever a Classic in any language but plain English.

Grad. I will endeavour to form myself by your instructions. But, tarry with me I intreat you—if you should leave me—

Sand. I'll not leave you—never fear. Here is the Queen of your Allegiance—Now Gradus stand to your arms!

Grad. I'll do my best;—but, I could wish that Miss Charlotte were the Purse Bearer!

Enter Miss DOILEY.

Sand. Hush!—Your obedient—allow me to introduce a Gentleman in whose affairs I am particularly interested—Mr. Gradus.

Miss D. Mr. Gradus! Is it possible?

Grad. Be not astonished, oh lovely Maiden, at my sudden Change! Beauty is a talisman which transforms mankind.

Miss D. Your transformation, I fear, is too sudden to be lasting.

Gradus. Transformation — resplendent Virgo! brightest Constellation of the starry Zone! I am but now created! Your Charms, like the Promethean fire, have warmed the clod to Life!

Miss D. But, may I be sure that you'll never subside into your former dross again?

Grad. Never. Sooner shall Gemini and Scorpio meet, Copernicus to Ptolomy resign the spheres—than I be what I was!

Miss D. (*Walking aside.*) I shall be in hysterics!

Sand. Well, you've hit it off tolerably for a *coup d'essai*—But, prithee, Gradus—cant you talk in a stile a little less fustian? You remember how those fine fellows conversed at dinner—no Effort—no Sentences—no cramp words; all was Ease and Impudence.

Grad. Yes, I remember. Now the shell is burst, I shall soon be fledged.

(Doiley *appears at the side, at a distance.*)

Doil. Why, who the dickens have we here!

Sand. (*Aside.*) So—there's the old Genius!

Miss D. But, I'm convinced now, I am sure—all this is merely put on—in your heart you are still what you were.

Grad. Yes Madam, still Gradus; but not that stiff scholastic Fool you saw this morning. No, no, I have learned that the acquisitions, of which your father is so absurdly fond, are useless lumber—that a man who knows more than his neighbours is in danger of being shut out of Society;—or, at best, of being invited to dinner once in a twelvemonth—to be exhibited like an antique Bronze—or a Porridge-pot from Herculaneum.

Doil. Whu! 'tis he! I'm all over in a fomentation.

Miss D. What then, you dont think Learning the greatest Blessing in the world?

Grad. Not I, truly, Madam—Learning! a vile *bore!*

Doil. Am I on my head—or my Heels?

[*Still behind.*

Grad. I shall leave all those Fopperies to the Grey-beards at College.—Let them chop Logic, or make english hashes out of stale Greek till they starve, for me.

Sand. This is your final resolution?

Grad. Fix'd! I have no study now—but the *Ton.*

Doil. Indeed!

Grad. You shall confess that a Man of Letters, may become a Man of the World—dress—grow an adept in the science of Taste—ogle at the Opera—at the Playhouse be vociferous—or suffer himself to be pigeon'd, with an easy air, at White's.

Miss D. Why, one would suppose you had been familiar in the *Bon Ton* all your life—you have, by heart, all the requisites to make a Figure in it?

Grad. The force of Beauty, Madam, has transformed me.

Doil. (*Aside.*) Aye, transformed indeed—a larned Philosopher into a chattering Magpie!

Miss Doil. How different from what you was this morning!

Grad. Oh, mention it not;—this morning! may it be blotted from Time's Ledger. I abhor my former self: witness now the Recantation of my Errors—Learning, with all its Tribe of solemn Fopperies, I abjure—abjure for ever.

Doil. (*Aside.*) Humph!—you do!

Grad. The study of what is vulgarly called Philosophy may suit a Monk; but, 'tis as unbecoming a Gentleman—as loaded Dice or a brass hilted sword.

Doil. Larning unbecoming a Gentleman! Go on—

Grad. Hebrew, I leave to the Jew Rabbies—Greek, to the Bench of Bishops—Latin, to the Apothecaries—and Astronomy to the Almanac-makers.

Doil. Better, and better.

Grad. The Mathematics—pure, mixed, speculative, and practical, with the whole Circle of Sciences, I consign, in a lump, to the old—who want Spirits, and to the Young—who want bread;—and now, you've heard my whole abjuration—

DOILEY *rushes forward.*

Doil. Yes—Yes—Yes!—I have heard too—I too have heard! Oh, that I should ever have been such a Dolt as to take thee for a man of Larning!

Grad. Mr. Doiley! [*Confounded.*

Doil. What! dont be dash'd man!—go on with your Jurations do. Yes, you'll make a shine in the *Tone!*—Oh, that ever I should be such a Ninny!

Sand. My dear Mr. Doiley—moderate your heat. How can a man of your Discernment—now carefully look at Mr. Gradus—I am sure he's a much prettier

fellow than he was—his Figure, and his Manner, are quite different.

Doil. Yes, yes, I can see that!—I can see that. Why he has reversed Master Æsop; he's the Lion —in the skin of an Ass. [*Pacing the stage.*

Grad. I must retrieve myself in his opinion!— The skin, Mr. Doiley, may be put off again; and be assured that the mind, which has once felt the sacred Energies of Wisdom, though it may assume, for a moment—

Miss D. So! so! so! [*Angrily.*

Sand. (*Runs up to him*) Heyday! If you play retrograde, I forsake you on the spot—and you are ruin'd with your Mistress! [*Aside.*

Grad. Dear Madam! believe me, that—What can I say! (*He stands hesitating between Mr. Doiley and his Daughter*) how assimilate myself to two such opposite Tastes? I am reeling between two Characters, like a Substantive between two Adjectives.

Doil. You!—you, for to turn Fop, and Maccaroni! Why, 'twould be as naterel for a Jew Robbin to turn Curate.—An Elephant in a Lace-Cap—a Bishop with a Rattle and Bells—couldn't be more posterous.

Sand. Nay now my dear Mr. Doiley—
[*Approaches him.*

Doil. Dear me—no dears! Why, if I wanted a Maccaroni—I might have had my choice; every Alley, from Hyde Park to Shadwell Dock, swarms with them—genuine; and, d'ye think I'll have an amphiberous animal—half and half, like a Sea-Calf!

Sand. Oh, if that's all—a hundred to ten—Gradus will soon be as unmixed a character as if he had never learnt his *Alpha Beta*, or known more of the Classics than their names.

Doil. Oh, I warrant him. What do you think, now, of the *Scratchi* and the *Horsi* and the rest of 'em—eh?

Grad. (*Goes to Miss Doiley*) Mere *Bores!* A par-

cel of brawney untaught fellows; if they'd stood candidates for rank in a College of Taste, they'd have been return'd *ignorantur*—would they not Madam?

Miss D. Oh, certainly! (*Aside.* I could almost love the fellow now, he has aided my plot so exactly.) [*Exit.*

Doil. You've been in wonderful haste to get rid of the *igranter* part—but, as it happen'd, that was the only part I cared for;—so now, you may carry your Hogs to another market.

Grad. Hogs! [*With Contempt.*

Doil. Aye—your cramp words—your Boars—your improvements—your—in short, you're not the man I took you for; so, you may trot back to College again—go Mister, and teach 'em the *Tone*, do!—How they will stare at—Jeremy Gradus, or the Monkey returned from his travels!

Sand. Upon my honour, you are too severe. (*Aside to Gradus*) Leave us man—leave us——I warrant I'll settle your affair!

Grad. (*Apart.*) I fear—not easily; he sticks to one point, like a rusty weather-cock—my dependance is on the Lady.

Sand. You'll allow Gradus to speak to Miss Doiley.

Doil. Oh, to be sure—the more he speaks, the more Sport for her—she's fond of a Laugh! Here—show this Mr. Gradus to the next room (*Exit Gradus*) give her a surfeit of nonsense by all means. Why, sure, Mr. Sandford, you'd no hand in transmogrifying him.

Sand. I had though. I couldn't endure seeing your charming daughter condemned to a collection of obsolete Greek Apothegms and Latin Quotations;—so—so I endeavoured to English him.

Doil. English him! I take that shocking ill of you Mr. Sandford—that I must tell you! Here are all my hopes gone like a Whiff of Tobacco!

Sand. My dear Mr. Doiley, you will be grateful

to us hereafter, if, instead of a mere Pedant for a Husband, we can give your Daughter a man endowed with Heaven's two best gifts—a good heart and common sense. This is our object, and this attachment of your's to mere Scholarship is a mere Whim!

Doil. Whim! well suppose it is—I'll indulge it. Worked hard forty years, and saved above twice as many thousand pounds; and with so much money, after so much labour, a man ought to be allowed his Whim.

Sand. True—provided it be for his good.

Doil. Well, and what good can be better than Scholardship?—that you may know how I set so much by it, I must tell you a bit of a Secret—lack o' Larning has been my great detriment! If I'd been a Scholard nobody can tell what I could have got by it! my plum might have been two—my—

Sand. Classical Learning would have been a singular qualification in driving Bargains for Russia-Tallow, and Whale-Blubber!

Doil. To be sure!—More than that, I do verily believe it hindered me from being Lord Mayor, only think of that—Lord Mayor of London!

Sand. Why how could that possibly be?

Doil. Why, I tended the Common Council and all the Parish Meetings, for fifteen years, without daring for to make one Arangue. At last, when a Westry was called about chusing of a Churchvauden, now thinks I, I'll show 'em what I'm good for! Our Alderman was ill of the Purples, so thinks I—if he tips off why not I as well as another? so I'll make them a Speech about Patrotts—and ax for their Votes!

Sand. A very judicious road to Authority!

Doil. If you'll believe me, I got up three times. SILENCE! says the Clerk each time, but---I dont know how it was—there was I, soon, the only silent man in the Westry! for you must know---somehow---my

Tongue grew so dry and stiff with Fright that I could not wag it, and so was forced to squat down and give in—amidst Horselaughs! and through the whole Ward- - -they nick-named me Dummy every afterwards!

Sand. Well, I had no idea of the vast Importance of Learning in Parochial affairs.—Yet, how men differ! now the family of Sir Wilford Granger are quite distressed by the obstinate attachment to the Sciences of that fine young fellow I told you of this morning.

Doil. Aye! and is he Sir Wilford Granger's son too? Knew his Father very well—kept a fine Study of horses, lent him money many a time, always punctual;—Good-man!

Sand. Aye, Sir, but he didn't like to see a young fellow, formed for Life in all its points and bewitching varieties, bury himself amidst obsolete Books, Systems, and Schisms—whilst pleasure woo'd, and joy solicited him in vain.

Doil. Dear me, dear me! I thought Sir Wilford had been wiser than that too; why I would have given the world for such a Son.

Sand. (*Aside.* He swallows it rarely!)—Oh he piques himself on such trifles as reading in their own Tongues the Greeks and Latins—but, above all things, on mastering the Quibblings of our English Philosophers. (*Aside.* I must contrive to make him content with English!)

Doil. *English* Philosophers! I wouldn't give That for them! (*snapping his fingers.*)

Sand. Why Sir, many admire much Boyle, Bacon—

Doil. Aye, and a vile *English* taste it is!

Sand. Did you never hear, Sir, of a Locke—a Newton—

Doil. Newton! oh aye—aye—I've heard of Sir Isaac—great man—Master of the Mint!

Sand. Oh, Sir! this youth has found a dozen mistakes in his Theories, and proved him wrong in one

or two of his Calculations—in short, he is advised to give the World a System of his own—in which, for aught I know, he'll prove the Earth to be Concave instead of Spherical, and the Moon to be no bigger than a punch bowl.

Doil. Prove him wrong!—he's the man—he's my man. Look'e Mr. Sandford—you've given a description of this young fellow that's set my blood in a foment. *Do* you, now, my dear friend, *do* you think now, that you could coax him into marrying my Daughter?

Sand. Why—neither Beauty, or Gold, have Charms for him. Knowledge—knowledge is his Mistress.

Doil. Aye! I'm sorry for that—and yet I'm glad of it too! Now, see what you can do with him—see what you can do.

Sand. I'll try. He promised to call on me here this evening—to proceed on a scheme of ours. I think I heard a grave knock—'tis likely enough to be his—I dare say he's below.

Doil. Below now—do go, and if he is—speak to him a bit—and bring him up, bring him up!

Sand. Well—well—I'll see what I can do! [*Exit.*

Doil. Thank'e, thank'e. I'll buy him twice as many books as a College Library but what I'll bribe him—that I will. Why the dickens does Elizabeth throw away time with that soft-head—that Gradus! He a man of Larning! Hang me if I dont believe his head's as hollow as that of my cane. Sure, she cant have taken a fancy to the smattering monkey! —Oh, here comes the downright Scholard—here he comes! Why, there's Greek and Algebray in the lines of his face—

Enter SANDFORD; *with* GRANGER *dressed very formally in black.*

Mr. Granger, Sir, your very humble Servant, Sir—I'm very glad to see you, Sir.

Grang. (*very solemnly*) I thank you, Sir.

Doil. I knew your father, Sir, as well as a beggar knows his Dish. Mayhap, Mr. Sandford told you that I wanted for to bring you and my daughter acquainted—I'll go and call her in.

Grang. It is unnecessary.

Doil. He seems a mighty silent man. (*apart*)

Sand. Studying—studying! Ten to one he's forming a discourse in Arabic, or revolving one of Euclid's Problems!

Doil. Couldn't you set him a talking a bit. I long for to hear him talk!

Sand. Come man—forget the old Sages a moment. Cant the Idea of Miss Doiley give a fillip to your Imagination?

Grang. Miss Doiley, I am informed, is lovely as a woman can be—but what is Woman?

Doil. (*Aside.*) Now for it!—What is Woman?

Grang. Only, one of nature's agreeable Blunders.

Doil. (*Aside.*—Ah!—ah!—that smacks of something!) Why, as to that, Mr. Granger, a woman with no Portion but her Whims, might be but a kind of a Jew's bargain—but, when fifty thousand is popt into the scale, she must be bad indeed, if her husband does'nt find her a pen'orth.

Grang. With men of the World, Mr. Doiley, fifty thousand pounds may be considered as Weight; but, in the balance of Philosophy,—gold is light—as phlogisticated air!

Doil. (*Aside.*—That's deep—I can make nothing of it—that must be fine!) Mr. Granger—the great account I have heard of your Larning, and what not, has made me willing for to be of kin to you.

Grang. Mr. Sandford, Sir, suggested to me your design—and, as it is as the Prize of Learning that you have nobly proposed your daughter—I confess myself attracted.

Doil. (*Aside.* But, I'll see a bit further though, first.) Now, pray, Mr. Granger—pray now—a—I say—will—(*To Sandford*) Ax him some far fetch'd question, that he may show himself a bit.

Sand. (*Aside.* What Conundrum shall I invent!) A far fetch'd question you would have it? Let me see! oh, Granger, is it your opinion that the Antipodes walk erect, or crawl on all four?

Grang. Thinking men always doubt!—but the best informations concur that they are Quadrupedes during two revolutions of the sun, and Bipedes ever after.

Doil. Quadpedes! Bipedes!—Oh—that *is* charming,—above my reach!

Sand. A surprising Transformation!

Grang. Not more surprising than the transformation of an Eruca to a Chrysalis—a Chrysalis to a Nymph—and a Nymph to a Butterfly!

Doil. (*Aside.*)—There again! I see now it will do—I see it will do! (*Pauses, and appears contemplating some Scheme*)—T'other shall have one chance yet—aye that he shall—hang me if he shant!

[*Exit chuckling and laughing.*

Grang. What's he gone off for, so abruptly?

Sand. Oh for his daughter—you may depend upon it. You have already succeeded. Give ye Joy, my dear fellow!—the Nymph—the Eruca—and the Chrysalis, have won the day.

Grang. How shall I curb my happiness! My dear Sandford, that was the luckiest question about the Antipodes.

Sand. Yes pretty successful. Have you been at your Studies?

Grang Oh, I've been in the Dictionary these two hours—and have picked up unintelligible English

enough to puzzle and delight the old Gentleman for the remainder of his life.

Sand. Here he is——hush!

Grang. I hear my dear Elizabeth's footsteps!

Doil. (*Pulls in* GRADUS *by the arm*, *Granger turns away disappointed*) Come along I say!—Come in here. What, are you afraid of being laugh'd at again. Here, I've brought him—one of your own kidney.—Ha, ha, ha!—now I'll lay a Gallon, you cant guess what I've brought him for.—I've brought him—ha! ha! ha! for to pit him against You (*to Granger*)—to see which of you two is the most larned Greek!

Grang. Destruction inevitable!

Sand. Here's a blow up——Greek!

Doil. Why, Mr. Granger, for all he looks so like a Ninny in his pie-pick'd jacket, he's got his Noddle full of Greek, and Algebray, and them things.—Why Gradus! dont stand aloof man—this is a Brother-Scholard I tell you.

Grad. (*Aside.* I believe I had better desert back to my original colours!)—A Scholar Sir!—all who have earned that Distinction are my brethren—*Carissime Frater! gaudeo te videre.*

Grang. (*distressed.*) Sir- - -you- - -I—if you please Sir!- - -(*Aside.* I wish thy largest Folio were about thy neck, and thou at the bottom of the black sea!)

Sand. Mr. Doiley! what can you mean!

Doil. Mean—why I tell you I mean to pit 'em, and to give Elizabeth to the winner. Touch him up (*to Granger*)—touch him up! shew him what a Fool he is.

Sand. Why you wont set them together by the Ears!

Doil. No—but I'm resolved to set them together by the tongues though. To cut the business short:—Mr. Gradus! you are to be sure a great dab at Larning, and what not, but I'll bet for Granger, my Daughter and fifty thousand to boot, that he beats you—and he that wins shall have her.

Grang. What a Stake! 'tis sufficient to inspire a dolt with the tongues of Babel. (*Apart to Sandford.* I must e'en venture with what I have been picking up this morning; I have stocked myself with the English of the Learned—unintelligible enough to pass with him for any thing.)

Sand. My dear Friend think of the Impropriety!

Doil. Fiddle-de-dee! I tell you I will have my Whim—and so here I take my Seat to see fair play—(*Places himself in a chair in the middle of the Stage.*) Gradus, set off. By Jenkins you'll find it a tough matter to beat Granger; he's one of your great Genis men—going to write a Book about Sir Isaac, and the Moon, and nobody knows what.

(*Miss Doiley and Charlotte enter at the back of the Stage.*)

Grad. If so, the more glorious will be my Victory! Come Sir, let us enter the Lists for this charming Prize (*turning to Miss D.*)—Name your Subject; we will pursue it syllogistically or socratically, as you please.

Grang. (*Aside.*) Confusion to your Syllogisms and Socraticisms!

Grad. Chuse your weapons—Hebrew—Greek—Latin—or English?

Doil. English!—I'll not have no English. What a plague—every Shoe-black jabbers English—so give us a touch of Greek to set off with—Come Gradus you begin!

Grad. If it is merely a Recitation in Greek that you want, you shall be gratified. An Epigram occurs to me which, though you will not be able to perceive how full it is of the Food for the Mind of that sublime Language, will give you an idea of its lofty Sound!

Char. (*Aside.*) Oh!—the lofty Sound will be Sentence of Death to our Hopes!

Grad. *Panta* gelos, kai *panta* konis, kai *panta* to meden,
Panta gar exalagon esti ta ginomena.

Panta-

Doil. Pshaw! *Panta try Pantry!* (*snapping his fingers, in great Disgust.*)—Food for the Mind! why 'tis nothing but about *Pantries!* The Old Grecians might love Tit-bits mayhap—but that's low for us! eh Sandford!

Sand. Oh, vulgarly low, Sir, I must confess; he might as well have spouted about a Pig-Stye!

Doil. Come Granger!—now for it—Elizabeth and fifty thousand!

Char. (*Aside.* Heigho! it is all over. He could as easily remember his Dame's first Lesson, as recollect a sentence in Greek.)

Doil. Come, you can talk Greek as well as Gradus! —What at a stand?

Grang. 'Tis but from anxiety to please you Sir— (*Aside.* Now Impudence, bestow on me thy brazen Vizor!)—Zanthus I remember, in a sublime description says—

Grad. Zanthus!—Sir, you surely err. Except to a River, Homer gives that name only to a Horse!

Grang. Sir, he was an Orator—and such a one, that Homer records the Gods themselves inspired him.

Grad. True Sir—but you wont deny—

Doil. Come—come!—fair play—I shant have no brow-beating; nobody offered for to contradict your Speech upon Pantries! So begin—what said Orator Zanthus?

Grang. (*Apart to Sandford.*—My Dictionary gleanings must e'en pass for my Greek!)—H-r-r-m! (*With slow solemn deliberation.*)—Lucid Orbs in Æther pensile irradiate th' expanse; refulgent scintillations in th' ambient void opake emit meteors humid; chrysalic Spheroids th' horizon vivify; æstifarious constellations, nocturnal Sporades, refrangerated radii, th' orb terrene illume!

Miss D. I breathe again! (*Aside.*)

Doil. There!—there! (*rubs his hands, stamps the floor in great glee, and runs up to him.*) Well done

Granger!—Now (*marches up to Gradus*) Gradus beat that!

Grad. I am enwrapt in Astonishment! You are imposed on, Sir—instead of Greek, you have heard a rant in English.

Doil. English!—that's too much!—Come Mister Gradus—d'ye take me for a Fool?—D'ye think I dont know my own Mother-tongue! (*in a great rage*) —'Twas no more like English, than I'm like Whittington's cat.

Grad. It was every syllable English.

Doil. There's Impudence!—There was'nt no word of it English—If you can possibly take that for English, hang me if I believe there was a word of Greek in all your *try pantries.*

Grad. Oh—the torture of Ignorance!

Doil. Ignorant!—Come, come, none of your tricks upon travellers! I know you mean all that as a skit upon my Edication—but I'd have you to know, Sir, that I'll read the hardest chapter of Nehemiah with you for your ears.

Grad. I repeat, that you are imposed upon.—Mr. Sandford I appeal to you!

Grang. —And I appeal.

Sand. Nay, Gentlemen, Mr. Doiley is your Judge in all disputes concerning—the vulgar tongue.

Doil. Aye, to be sure I am! Who cares for your peals? I peal too; and I tell you I wont be imposed on!—Here Elizabeth!—I have got you a husband at last—to my heart's content.

Miss D. Him! Sir—what then am I to give up my chance of being a Judge's Lady, or the Lady of a Civility Doctor!

Doil. What with that *Beau* book-worm—that argufies me down that I dont know English! Dont go for to provoke me—bid that Mr. Granger welcome to my house—he'll soon be Master on't.

Miss D. Sir, in obedience to the (*archly*) Commands of my Father—

Doil. Shant say Obedience—say something kind of yourself; he's a man after my own heart!

Miss D. Then, Sir, without Reserve, I acknowledge that your choice of Mr. Granger is not—disagreeable to me.

Doil. That's my dear Bet! There—do you understand that—Mr. *try Pantry!*—is that English?

Grang. Yes, so plain that it has exsuscitated my Understanding—I perceive that I have been duped!

Doil. Aye, well—I had rather you should be the Dupe than I!

Grad. I have no inclination to contest which—if the lovely Charlotte will not disappoint the hopes which she has created.

Char. Perhaps not; provided that, in your character of Husband, you'll be as singular and old-fashion'd as the Dress you wore this morning.

Doil. What, have you taken a Fancy to the Scholard? Well, you're a cute Girl, and mayhap may correct his folly; and, that you may'nt repent retaining him in the family, I dont care if I throw in a couple of thousands, or so. And d'ye hear Gradus —I dont love for to bear a particle of Malice, so I'll forget and forgive wholly, provided you'll trot back to College—and larn the difference between Greek and English!

Grad. I have had enough of Languages! You see I have engaged a Tutor to teach me the World! and if I play my part there as well as I did at Brazen-Nose——your Indulgence will grant me Applause!

A L B I N A.

A TRAGEDY.

This Tragedy was placed in GARRICK'S *hands in* 1776, *immediately after his quitting the stage. It was not brought out until the year* 1779, *after his death; and then at the Haymarket Theatre: the Scene is laid in feudal times, when the Warrior was a Crusader, and Judicial Battle was awarded as a remedy for Wrongs.*

The Passion, or state of the mind, with relation to an offending Superior is Hatred, with relation to an offending Inferior is Contempt. Envy is the meaner vice, it is the Passion excited by one (whether offending or not), who ceases to be an Equal. The Daughter of a Family whose Blood has been attainted, sees with envy indeed malicious her eager hope of recovering her Station defeated by the accumulating good fortune of her under whom she has sunk; and he who is defeated in Love, endures the severest goadings of the Passion towards a prosperous competitor, whose claims he cannot perceive to be greater than his own. From these two Sources, this Tragedy has its natural foundation in the Passion of Envy.

TO

THE RIGHT HONORABLE

LORD HARROWBY.

MY LORD,

Albina had the Honour of being shown to your Lordship almost in her Infancy. Her faults, or her graces, you are already acquainted with, as she grew up also, in some degree, beneath your Lordship's eye. She is now arrived at maturity; and if, in her present state, my Lord, you should find her more polished than when she had last the honour of your attention, it is chiefly owing to the hints with which you then favoured me.

I have the Honour to be,
My Lord,
Your Lordship's respectful
And obedient humble Servant,

HANNAH COWLEY.

PROLOGUE.

(PROMPTER, *speaking without.*)

PRAY, pray, come back! The Author, Sir, declares
That, if you speak—

(*Enter Mr.* PARSONS.*)

Hang Authors, and their airs!}
I say I will speak, though she fire with rage,
What Right has She upon our Summer Stage?
With dismal stories, and long acts in Verse,
Solemn, and slow paced, like a midnight hearse?
Hey-dey! from floor to roof, such crouded rows
As though we shivered in December's snows!
Absurdly odd!—Beneath a burning sky
To croud it here, to pant, and sob, and cry,
Whilst Madmen swagger, and their Madams die!
'Twas my advice to keep these doors close shut
Against that ranting, murder-minded, Slut
MELPOMENE; I never yet could see
Those charms of her's—I'm sure she's none for me!
My Mistress—little THAL, you know I mean
The laughing Goddess of the COMIC Scene,
She sent me hither, dubbed me Plenipo—
" Dear Parsons! Quick! she cried, this instant go,
Fly to yon Audience, who in Judgment sit,
And plead Our Cause before the Jury Pit.
Tell them this Authorling abjures my reign,
To fill my haughty SISTER's sanguine train;

* The original Performer of Old Doiley, in " WHO'S THE DUPE?"

A lawless Rebel, from my Banner flown—
I call for Justice—justice from the Town!"
—I'll do't, said I; and then, in aid of you,
My wrongs I'll usher to their Worships too;
Me, she forsakes, her little *Doiley* slights,
He who hath played so many weary nights,
So talked of Algebra, and Greek, and Latin,
That *larned Scholards* could no word squeeze pat in.
Down with her Tragedy! down, down, ye Wits!
For, me and THAL the fickle Baggage quits;
Spoil her Heroics! her new Buskins doff!
And then—

(*Enter Mrs.* MASSEY.*)

You there! oh, oh—then I must off! [*Exit.*

Mrs. MASSEY.

Not write in Tragic stile!—pray tell me Why?
Who made you laugh, perchance *may* make you cry.
When the *Light* Scenes, our Author's pencil drew,
Extorted, all she asked, a Smile from you,
Her Mind, encouraged, new-born ardor caught,
A loftier fancy, and sublimer thought;
To her rapt eye the Martial Ages rose,
And, as her Muse impelled, the story flows,
Whilst hideous Envy lurking plans its Crimes,
Midst Gaudes and Tournaments of feudal times.
'Tis true, she calls you from th' attractive shade,
The zephyr'd Meadow, and the leafy Glade;
And, not to cheer with Satire's poignant hit,
Ironic Humour, and the flash of Wit;
Her Wand she waves, and instant to your eyes
Tempestuous Passions, guilty deeds, arise!

* The original Performer of Albina.

For these, our Author's magic Circle's drawn,
For these she bids you from the fragrant Lawn,
Toshrink with Fear, to melt with tender Woe,
And feel the pleasing tear of Pity flow.
Yes, tears she means to prompt, whilst you secure,
Amidst the raging storm the wreck endure,
From hottest tempest safe, within this pale,
Where ventilators catch the cooling gale.
But, should a Tempest in *your* quarter rise,
'Twould scare us more than thunder in the skies;
You, harmless midst our storms, your place ensures,
Do you then save us harmless, Sirs, from your's!

CHARACTERS.

MEN.

THE KING.	*Richard I. of England.*	*Mr. Usher.*
WESTMORELAND.	*Father of Albina.*	*Mr. Digges.*
EDWARD.	*Her Lover.* — —	*Mr. Dimond.*
GONDIBERT.	*Her Brother in Law.*	*Mr. Palmer.*
HENGIST.	*An Officer.* — — —	*Mr. Egan.*
EGBERT.	*Steward to Gondibert.* —	*Mr. Aiken.*
OSWALD.	*Steward to Westmoreland.* —	*Mr. Gardner.*
GWILLIM.	*Albina's Servant.* — —	*Mr. R. Palmer.*
HERALD.		

WOMEN.

ALBINA.	*Daughter of Westmoreland.*	*Mrs. Massey.*
ELFRIDA.	*A reduced Dependent on her.*	*Miss Sherry.*
ADELA.	*Attendant on Elfrida* — —	*Mrs. Poussin.*
INA.	*Albina's Attendant.* — —	*Mrs. Le Fevre.*

ALBINA.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I. A MAGNIFICENT GOTHIC HALL.

Enter Earl WESTMORELAND *and* HENGIST.

WESTMORELAND.

REPORT my pledged obedience to the King,
Tell him his gracious Summons I'll obey,
And meet the Council at th' appointed hour.
Yet still I hope the flying rumour false!

HENGIST.

Too well, my Lord, the tidings are confirmed;
The sacrilegious Saracen hath broke
The Peace he asked; again the Crescents blaze
Throughout the Holy Plains, whilst yellow streamers,
Borne by the fickle air which late embraced
The Christian Standard, to the World proclaim
The impious War.

WESTMORELAND.

Time! render back the years
When such a tale as this had fired my soul,
And sent me 'gainst th' unrighteous camp in haste
Of holy zeal! The Fire's not yet extinct,
But, cankering Age the sinews of my youth
Hath worn away!

HENGIST.

Bewail not Age, so graced;
Which, in its slow advance, to gain a welcome,
Brought Honours Triumphs and a Nation's Love!

WESTMORELAND.

Forbear! Thou com'st a messenger of War,
Away then all the flattering arts of Peace
And deal in words more suited to the Times!

HENGIST.

Your pardon, Lord!—Know then, the King in haste
His veteran Nobles orders to attend.
A powerful Army he, to Asia's plains,
In person leads. Mean time, ten thousand warriors
Depart as his precursors to the field,
Led on by him they love, the gallant EDWARD,
Who, ere the down of youth forsook his cheek,
Deeds had performed that Laurel'd Age might envy.

WESTMORELAND.

His Manhood will fulfil his Youth's high promise;
He a bright star in early splendor rose,
And will in Glory set. Had Heaven bestowed
On me a Son like him, without Regret
I'd nerveless sink into the seat of Age,
Count *his* exploits, upon his deeds grow vain,
And, when my country claimed her Leading Warrior,
With boastful brow I'd proudly show my Son!

HENGIST.

Though from your House a Son hath been withheld,
A Daughter was bestowed so rich in Graces,
To give attraction to her sterling Sense,
In mind so excellent—

WESTMORELAND.

She's my Delight!
My only pledge of chaste connubial love;
Her Mother's beauty, and her mother's Worth,
Survive the grave, they live, in my Albina!

[*Enter* SERVANT.

SERVANT.

With earnestness, Lord Edward doth demand
An audience of your Grace.

WESTMORELAND.

Conduct him hither.
[*Ex.* HENGIST *and* SERVANT.
He comes to boast a Soldier's happiness.
[*Enter Lord* EDWARD.
Welcome, young Hero! I partake the transports
Which this high honour, this unsought Command,
Must give a heart that pants like your's for Fame!

EDWARD. (*Confused.*)

My Lord!

WESTMORELAND.

How's this! Have I misread your heart?
Now whilst our fiery youth are all in arms,
And martial ardors dart from every eye,
Edward, as if oppressed by blushing shame,
Averts his Head!

EDWARD.

He ought to blush, you'll feel!
The Soldier, chosen by his King to lead
His warlike bands and carry Britain's sword
To holy Zion's gate, he, whose rapt breast
No flame but glory should confess,
Now stands before you with a fainting heart,
To tell a tale—of Love.

WESTMORELAND.

The Time's unapt;
Yet, for the tale, why should a Soldier blush?
He who, most ardent in the sanguine field,
Contemning danger braves the whizzing storm,
Best merits conquest o'er the female heart,
He best deserves the Happiness of Love.

EDWARD.

This, from a Hero's mouth, my sighs doth warrant;
Edward no longer then shall fear to own
The Sway of silken tresses and of Eyes.

But, Westmoreland, with equal Patience hear,
That she who raised the flame within my breast,
She who doth, pitiless, refuse my vows,
Is matchless Raimond, is—thy beauteous Daughter!

WESTMORELAND.

(*Aside.*—I thank thee, Heaven!)—Is this a sudden Passion,
Amidst the whims of youthful Fancy grown,
And, by some casual glance excited?

EDWARD.

No!
A faithful Love, which sprang in earliest days,
Nor know I when th' attachment first began.
Deep in my heart she'd fix'd her beauteous form,
When, by my Father sent, I England left
For distant lands.

WESTMORELAND.

So early!

EDWARD.

E'en so early.
Eer glory or Ambition touched my breast,
Albina filled it with resistless Love.

WESTMORELAND.

Did you disclose your passion to my child?

EDWARD.

If the unartful language of mine eyes
Betrayed my hope, she knew I was her slave;
But, youthful bashfulness sealed up my lips.
And, when I left, reluctant, Albion's shores,
Not one soft glance my longing eye could catch
To sooth the raging Passion in my breast.

WESTMORELAND.

But, Gallia's shores a ready cure bestowed:

EDWARD.

In vain the beauties of the Gallic Court
Spread forth their nets, in vain Italia's dames
High deck'd their charms; impatient I returned
To urge my suit at your Albina's feet—
Ah! day of grief!—she now was Raimond's wife!—

Despair and Fury seized my tortured mind,
His hated name I loathed, and—

WESTMORELAND.

You forget.
Earl Raimond was my Son ! the chosen Husband,
To whom I gave Albina !

EDWARD.

Transports pardon
Which, at this distant period, shake my frame,
And guess, from them, what Edward hath endured!
—Earl Raimond's arms, and mine, against the Saracen
Our Monarch did command; and, then I proved
That I was worthy of Albina's hand.

WESTMORELAND.

Fame long hath vaunted of your valiant acts.

EDWARD.

Of Fame, of Valour, 'tis not that I boast,
'Tis not the prowess of my arm in war,
'Tis of a deed, a Ray from Rome inspired,
And you will praise.

WESTMORELAND.

My warmest hopes you wake!

EDWARD.

'Twas on a day when Truce had been proclaimed
I passed beyond the lines, t' observe the foe.
By flitting gleams of burnish'd mail drawn on
Within the ambush of a tufted thicket
Three Saracens, who waged unequal war
Against one english warrior, I espied,
My courser swiftly bore me to the spot.
Though Raimond 'twas! o'erpow'r'd and prone on earth,
Yet, with my shelt'ring sword I cleft the arm,
Which, aiming at his heart, full soon had pierced.
By Hope inspired he rose—and we were victors!

WESTMORELAND.

Talk not of Roman, 'twas a Briton's act!
And suited well a Christian Warrior—
Go to Albina, plead your passion, firmly,

She must, she shall, reward thy Truth and Honour!
Tell her, her Father doth approve thy suit,
And speeds thee, with his Wishes, to her heart.

EDWARD.

For this, great Westmoreland, I thank thee; but,
Her vainly I've assail'd with fervent vows.
Cold Sorrow still the beauteous dame detains
In frozen mood, and all Love's arrows chills.

WESTMORELAND.

In woman's Feints not yet have you been versed.
You, who can brave Bellona when she shakes
The spear of war, I warrant are dismayed
At Beauty's frown, and tremble if she sweep
Her train in scorn! But, you must learn to bear
With numerous fancies, Vanity must view
In every shifting form, yet still be pleased,
Still patiently admire—or, never hope
A woman's phantasy to win.

EDWARD.

Such service
Albina never claimed; yet, if 'twere so,
Whole years I'd pass, a vassal to her wish,
And would be any thing her mind should will.
—But now, to those sweet homages which Love
Delights to pay, a fated limit's fixed;
The third day hence, I quit for Palestine.

WESTMORELAND.

The period's short! It scarcely time accords
To break a piece of gold; or carve her name,
Entwined with your's upon the Willow's bark!

EDWARD.

Ah! my good Lord, thus lightly treat not pain!
For, if I leave her Raimond's Widow still,
'Twill exile me till death; if Edward's Bride—
With prompt delight I will return in Triumph,
Lay my proud Laurels at Albina's feet,
And seek no further glory than her Love.

WESTMORELAND.

Well, to my Daughter I will urge your suit;

This do I owe the love your father bore me,
And to the fame your Virtues have attained.
Here meet me, in an hour, and hope Success.

EDWARD.

This, noble Westmoreland, I dared to hope.
—Whilst joy and gratitude, like fires confined,
Struggle within my heart for utterance,
My tongue, uncustom'd to descant on these,
Denies due words;—yet, trust me Sir—

WESTMORELAND.

Save them
For purposes more fit; Words Ladies win,
But Soldiers only can be gained by Deeds.
[*Exeunt, severally.*

SCENE II.

A GARDEN, BELONGING TO ALBINA.

Enter ELFRIDA, *followed by* ADELA.

ELFRIDA.

Why shines the Sun thus gaily all around!
The feather'd habitants of Air, whose tones
Mellifluous enchant the ear, almost
Seem with their cheery notes my woes t' insult.
What, then throughout the range of nature's beings
Am *I* the most unblest?—They, almost conscious,
Chant songs of cheerfulness for good possessed,
No good I know, no Gratitude I feel,
An Outcast and undone!

ADELA.

Your sorrows, Madam,
With passing time encrease!

ELFRIDA.

To griefs like mine,
Time brings no lenient balm. Each dawning day
Is a fresh record of my abject state.
Born, Adela, to lofty Name and Rank,

Bright pomp attending on my younger years,
And blessings springing round me as I moved—
Oh! thou shouldst wonder that my swelling soul
Can stoop, a moment, to this vile dependence—
It cannot stoop! chance hath depress'd my state,
Still unsubdued is my aspiring Mind!

ADELA.

You think too deeply; sorrows, keen as your's,
Chequer the common course of human life.

ELFRIDA.

'Tis from our Feelings sorrows have their Force—
What then are mine? State, Fortune, Rank, with all
The joys they bring, torn from my eager hold,
Torn from my hold, still present to my thoughts;
Their shadows haunt me as I bend my frame,
And, in humility, receive my bread!

ADELA.

Alas! you think unjustly of Albina;
Still amiable and good, she sooths your griefs,
And, with unceasing kindness—

ELFRIDA.

Kindness? What!
And was I then for kindly Pity born?
Thou, who art left the sole remaining wreck
Of my lost grandeur, knew'st me once her Equal.
Her Goodness tortures me; Earl Sibald's Heiress
Should grant, and not receive; she should protect,
Not seek protection.

ADELA.

Though dependent now,
Yet still; such blessings do attend your state—

ELFRIDA.

Thou, Adela! to meek Dependence born,
Enjoy'st its scanty Comforts; me they torture.
The height, from which I fell, I must reclimb!
Not with the Linnet doth the Eagle build,
Or stoop to batten with the lowly Wren.

ADELA.

Why struggle thus with Fate? The noble Countess

Your Welfare studies, and deserves your Love.

ELFRIDA.

Had I ne'er fall'n, and did I not depend,
I might perhaps esteem, perhaps e'en love her;
But now!—My whole Fate learn, then think thee well
What thoughts she gives me! Know that 'tis through Edward,
Through Edward only, I can hope to gain
The glorious steep whence tyrant Fate hath cast me.
But this Albina, she whom I must love!
His sordid vows, in nets of gold, hath caught.

ADELA.

And, had you, through Lord Edward, hopes!

ELFRIDA.

E'en him.

ADELA.

Why, 'twas his Father that brought woe on your's,
Through him Earl Sibald was of Treason tainted,
He hurled the ruin that o'erwhelms your house,
Caused all the ills you mourn.

ELFRIDA.

Have I forgot?
No.—His stern Loyalty made me an Orphan!
But, Edward shall repair my bitter wrongs.
My Lineage is as great as thine, proud Countess!
My Form as well befits a Lover's vow;
The only Boon Elfrida can accept
Is, to partake his Greatness and his Name,
That would be boon indeed, all less is Insult!

ADELA.

But doth then Edward - - - - will this fate be your's?

ELFRIDA.

The Countess stands 'twixt me and every hope!
Had Fortune smiled less lavishly on her,
Edward's whole heart had been resigned to me,
And I restored to all my early honours.

ADELA.

And why not still? for she, reserved and cold,

With unselecting eye each lover sees,
And Edward sinks, unmarked, amidst the croud.

ELFRIDA.

Raimond! still Edward scorn; and Edward! learn,
That all my native Hate is but suspended,
My mind's in equipoise, alike prepared
To deem thee Lover, or to deem thee foe!

ADELA.

The Countess, and her Father, quick approach.

ELFRIDA.

Ah! then retire, unseen. [*Exit* ADELA.
My low estate
May make me deemed obtruder in their way—
This sheltering Bower conceals me from their view.
[*Enters the Bower.*

Enter WESTMORELAND *and* ALBINA.

ALBINA.

Oh, my good Lord, urge not your daughter thus!
Ne'er be it said of noble Raimond's Widow
That she grew sick of weeds in one short year,
And lightly changed them for the Bridal Vest.

WESTMORELAND.

More time than that has passed, in pensive hours,
Since your late Lord's lamented Obsequies:
He was, by *me*, selected for your husband,
Whom you, in Duty, took.

ALBINA.

In Duty mourn.
Nay, had Albina's heart forgot the Virtues
Which made her Lord so worthy of its love,
Yet still, she dares not slight the laws of Custom,
Nor theme for slander give licentious tongues.

WESTMORELAND.

Enough to custom, and to grief, thou'st given.
Because, some months, you bore the name of Wife,
Wilt waste thy blooming youth in widowhood?

ALBINA.

I have not sworn to hear no second love.
To Raimond's mem'ry grant another year,
And then---In truth, my Lord, you prompt my tongue
Beyond Discretion's bounds!

WESTMORELAND.

Come, come, Albina;
Though, to a Lover, you might wear this guise
Of coy reserve, yet, to a Father's eye,
Your Mind should now appear as legible
As in the days of prattling Infancy.
Raimond deserved the render of your tears,
And you have paid full tribute to his Worth.
—Consider, now, the brave the youthful Edward,
The prize for whom contending Beauties strive!
His name and wealth amongst the first are ranked,
And high he stands in royal Richard's favour.

ALBINA.

I know his merits, have perceived his Love;
Nay, I will own, my dying Lord from Palestine
Did, in his parting message give me charge,
That, if again the holy marriage bonds
I e'er should wear, that I should chuse, beyond
All others chuse, his Friend the noble Edward—
But, did not bid me, o'er his *turfless* grave,
Blithe Hymeneals sing!

WESTMORELAND.

Then his Dirge chaunt
In junction with Lord Edward's, who may soon
Cease also to exist; more he of Love
Than War the victim.

ALBINA.

War!

WESTMORELAND.

Perchance of War.
In three days he returns to Palestine,
Our Royal Master hath on him bestowed
The levies for the Holy plains; from which

He'll ne'er return, if you're not left his Wife!

ALBINA.

Can this be true? Or, mean you, Sir, to try
Whether within my heart there be concealed
More love for Edward than Reserve would own?

WESTMORELAND.

So thick a Veil chaste Coyness did not weave
As to conceal your Love. To Holy Land
He surely goes;—in triumph to return,
Or stay till death—Albina must decree!

ALBINA.

Then, coy reserve and woman's wiles farewell!
My fears force off the veil I still would wear—
Oh, shield my burning blushes, whilst I own
Edward is dear unto Albina's heart
As fame or conquest to the banner'd Hero.
—When on Lord Raimond you bestowed my hand,
E'en then, the Image of the blooming Edward
Made Duty to my heart an arduous task!
But, Virtue aided my devoted mind,
And Raimond's worth, and manly tenderness,
Had, I believed, converted all my love—
'Till freedom taught that virtue had but hid,
Not razed, the deep impression had been made.

WESTMORELAND.

Well may my heart be proud of such a Daughter!
How pure the transport, exquisite the joy,
By favouring Heaven for Parents' minds reserved,
When, from the fiery combat of the Passions,
Their children rest untainted in the strife!
—By Honour guarded, and by Virtue crown'd,
To thee I give, a Child's supremest gain,
Most glorious meed, a grateful Father's thanks!

ALBINA.

My Lord, you surely do o'errate the Merit,
Where to have failed were gross and deadly shame!

WESTMORELAND.

The best reward, Albina, thee awaits;
Thy Edward loves thee, loves with fervent truth.

Yield then thy hand to him who rules thy heart,
Let me to-morrow greet Lord Edward—Son!

ALBINA.

Oh, grant a longer space—a few short days,
To chase the sadness from my widowed brow;
Lest I insult the blissful marriage feast
With pensive looks ill suited to the day.

WESTMORELAND.

Within three days must Edward England quit,
For hostile camps, and scenes of savage war!
Necessity demands the hurried Rite.
Tomorrow bless—the man thy country honours!
A Father, yes, your Father asks the boon.

ALBINA.

The deed my Father asked, my lips, or heart,
Have never yet denied; tomorrow then,
Since you my Lord command, tomorrow's sun
Beholds Lord Raimond's Widow—Edward's Bride.

WESTMORELAND.

May all that's good then reach you with its beams!
May passing moments dissipate regrets,
Ye which approach, come teeming with delight,
To chear the Dawn that crowns her truth and virtue.
Oh, be distinguished in Time's ebbing course,
Replete with blessings, full of virtuous joy,
The favour'd morn that makes Albina happy!
[*Exeunt.*

Enter ELFRIDA, *from the Bower.*

ELFRIDA.

May vengeance mark it! Torture! are my views,
Like air-formed visions fled? The darling Hope,
Enriching distant prospect, is no more,
And I awake to horror. Mad'ning thought—
Albina triumphs and Efrida's scorned!
In lieu of all of yesterday's gay dream
I'm but to view a haughty rival's bliss,
At grov'ling distance see her towering fate

And then, in Envy, pine away my life!
(*Enter* ALBINA.)

ALBINA.

In tears, Elfrida! Whence such mark of woe
Whilst Joy and Happiness beam forth on me?

ELFRIDA.

Let Cause exist, I too will boast of Joy.

ALBINA.

Hear then a cause! You know, with ardent passion
The noble Edward long hath sought my Love;
Now know that, though concealed, the tender flame
Within my bosom glowed; and that, tomorrow,
The holy Rite will sanctify our love.

ELFRIDA.

You, justly may rejoice—but, on Elfrida
When will fortune shine, that she may yield
Her heart to Joy and beam her face with smiles?

ALBINA.

What bliss e'er shone on me, that reached not you?
Come, chase away this unavailing gloom!
Albina is your Friend, and, in her love,
Thou may'st find shelter from the World's chill frown.

ELFRIDA.

This air of Patronage I feel my bane
More poignant than Contempt. (*Aside.*)
I thank you much!
Well do I know myself your Bounty's creature,
Your table feeds me, and your coffers clothe;
I, who boast Ancestry as great as your's,
Remain dependent on your charity!

ALBINA.

And blame you me for this, unjust Elfrida?
Your ruin'd fortunes often have I mourn'd,
And soothed your sorrows with a Sister's kindness—
You seem to lack your usual Courtesy!

ELFRIDA.

Nay, pardon then!—Untemper'd like my Sex,
I have no sympathy with Lover's thoughts;
Their hopes, their fears, their soft solicitudes,

Find here no Unison. The fire which beats
My breast is fiercer flame—is bright Ambition!

ALBINA.

Ambition was not destined for our Sex;
Leave it to bolder Man, whose mind capacious
Is aptly fitted to so proud a guest!
A sweeter inmate Nature gave to us,
As a fond parent to her last born child
For Woman she her choicest gift reserved,
And portion'd her with generous Love.

ELFRIDA.

But Love,
May'st thou be ever stranger to my heart!
Whoe'er doth nourish thee a Traitor feeds,
Will rob her of repose, her virtue snare.
Thou, merciless, obscur'st the virgin's fame,
As misty vapours veil Aurora's rise
O'erclouding all her chearful Morn of life!
The Fate pronounced on disobedient Woman
By Love's conveyed, inflicted, and fulfilled.

ALBINA.

Oh, 'tis all false! Thou dost ill judge the source
From which each Blessing springs.—Oh rather say
The heart, untouched by love, is like a lute
Which, yet untuned, hath Discords only given,
For, that no Master hath its powers called forth.
When tender feelings, of a female heart
Your bosom shall not pain, Elfrida find me. [*Exit.*

ELFRIDA.

First will I find—th' impetuous Gondibert!
—What Revolutions have been worked by Love?
And shall less Sway be held by proud Ambition?—
Ambition! thou whose flame can only live
In minds from those gross elements refined
Of which the Herd of human kind are made—
The passion slaves but fools shall yield to thee!
I'll strait to Gondibert, whose long check'd rage
Shall, like a torrent from its mound, break forth
O'erwhelming all restraint. His furious transports,
With voice of Friendship, guilefully, I'll stir,
And guide them to my purpose at my Will! [*Exit.*

ACT THE SECOND.

Scene I. A gothic colonnade.

Enter Gondibert, *followed by* Egbert.

EGBERT.

My Lord, your sorrows break my aged heart!
I do entreat you, yield your ear to Reason!

GONDIBERT.

Reason?—Distraction!

EGBERT.

When in schools you studied,
I've heard you much of Reason vaunt, Philosophy
And Virtue;—now, when all their aid you need,
You spurn them, with a blind contempt, away!

GONDIBERT.

They have no force, no power, beyond the Schools
Wherein they're taught. Dost think the fools who preach 'em
E'er felt, like me, the energies of Passion,
The mental torture of a hopeless Love?

EGBERT.

That it is hopeless is a cause—

GONDIBERT.

For Madness;
Egbert thy Lecture cease! thy chilly blood,
Creeping with torpid calmness through thy veins,
Ill suits thee for a counsellor to me.

Give me, one yet feels fire! one, whose high mind,
Superior to the Shackles of his youth,
Makes Virtue and Philosophy subserve,
Not stoops to be their Slave!

EGBERT.

Think on the bar,
Th' eternal bar, that Heaven has placed betwen you!—
She was your Brother's wife!

GONDIBERT.

That word is torture!
It is a viper's sting, an incantation
That conjures up remorseless fiends to rack me.
Oh! that she were not Sister!—Egbert, Egbert!
I could turn girl, and weep for what I've lost.
A single day before my brother's marriage
I from the war returned, when first she met
My fascinated eye 'twas at the altar!

EGBERT.

In truth, my Lord, your Fortitude was tried.

GONDIBERT.

Oh! were the Sun, refulgent through the day,
Its beams to dart amidst the shades of night,
Not more amaze would seize the mind of man
Than seized on me when I beheld Albina,
As there, in snowy robes bedeck'd, she seemed
Incarnate Chastity.—One week had saved me!
I know the earnest pleadings I'd have urged
Would soon have taught the timid beauteous maid
That Raimond were for Gondibert well changed.

EGBERT.

Your Sorrow, then, you virtuously o'ercame;
Why should it now, with strength revived, break out?

GONDIBERT.

Wherefore revive?—Does she not wed again!
I could have passed my life without a bliss
Beyond the rights which custom gives a Brother;
To see her every day, to fix my eyes
Whole hours, with timid love, upon her face,

To feast my ears with the bewitching notes
Of her sweet voice—this still were Happiness!

EGBERT.

'Twould be a snare, that might entangle both
In irremediable woe!

GONDIBERT.

Impossible!
For I do swear such mastery of love
Had I obtained, to such Refinement brought it,
With greater purity ne'er Angels loved,
No wish unhallowed lived within my breast;
But, when her heart she gives up to another—

EGBERT.

Oh, yield not thus, my Lord, to passions wild;
The mental fever will disturb your Reason
With images that no where do exist
But in your Fancy's colouring.

GONDIBERT.

He, Edward,
As my ill star, doth ever cross my fortune.
His headlong valour in the field my Name
Obscured, and, in the tournament at Orleans,
In th' eye of France, he bore from me the crown:
And, now, he robs me of the scanty bliss,
Possessing which, in truth I envied not
His Trophies or his Fame.

EGBERT.

Then be revenged!
Strive to regain the Fame of which you're robbed;
Court Glory, greet her in the fields of Death,
She's the fit mistress for your Years and Rank.
Shame! to waste youthful hours in languid sighs,
In which your trophied Ancestors obtained
Their deathless names, by feats of valorous might
Atchieved for England!

GONDIBERT. (*Aside.*)

No! she shall not wed:
All Arts I'll try, and, if they fail, this arm—
This arm shall steep their marriage torch in blood.

[*Exit.*

EGBERT.

How the fair mind on man bestowed from Heaven,
All perfect source, fell Passion doth destroy!
Why, Gondibert would once have shrunk from Vice
As the chaste plant doth shrink from mortal touch.
His Virtue, strength'ning with Age, I've seen
Firm him amidst untoward Fortune's shocks;
But now, unhallowed Love his mind doth sap,
And vice hopes triumph o'er a noble Ruin.
'Tis I must save him! If one spark of Virtue
Yet ember in his mind, oh! grant me Heaven
Afresh to wake it to immortal flame! [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

AN APARTMENT.

EDWARD *and* ALBINA, *sitting.*

EDWARD. (*Rises.*)

Blest the Commission which thou seem'st to dread;
But for the King's command, I might have sigh'd
More irksome Years, without a gleam of hope,
Nor known the transport—that I'm dear to thee!
That rapt'rous thought will give thy Edward's arm
Resistless force, is presage sure of Victory.

ALBINA.

Ah! Love, that ruled your breast, whilst Doubts and Fears
Kept waked its flame, yields place to Glory now:
Your Eye, by strong Imagination fired,
Impatient glances for the burnish'd field,
The clang of arms arouses every sense,
The shouts of Triumph vibrate in your ear,
Whilst you're again the Hero and forget
Love and Albina.

EDWARD.

Then may Cowardice

Unnerve this arm, when, with our valiant hosts,
I meet in war the mockers of our faith!
As soon shall I, amidst attesting Nations,
Be known to yield, and, trembling, plead for Mercy.
As, for one moment, to forget Albina—
'Twas but o'er thee, mine eye delighted roved,
They were Love's glances that you thus accuse!

ALBINA.

Will you, of me, in battle's Conflict think,
And will you, when impulsive Glory prompts
To some advent'rous charge, remember then
That 'tis Albina's life which you expose?

EDWARD.

Mere War and Conquest! what are ye to this?
Yes, I do swear to you, sweet Arbitress,
That if rash enterprize e'er court my daring
Thy bright enchanting image shall withhold me.
My life, no common one to thee united,
Marked out for bliss extreme, and every joy,
As thine I will preserve.

ALBINA.

This Picture take.
As the shrill trumpet awful signal gives,
Ere in the dreadful Ardor of the fight
Reflection s lost, attach it to your breast;
And, glancing as you fix it, think its Smiles
To Terror turned, the cheerful eye bedimmed
With anxious tears, its lips reproaching you
With deeming lightly of the life, to her
Engaged whose form it bears.

EDWARD.

How utter thanks
For this rich gift? It is a talisman,
Which shall protect me singled out by Death,
And parry each Assault.

(Enter female Attendant.)

ATTENDANT.

Lord Gondibert
Claims audience of your private ear.

ALBINA.

'Tis well. [*Exit Attendant.*

EDWARD.

Lord Gondibert!

ALBINA.

He hath a Brother's right,
And, for his Brother's sake, he doth regard me.
Indulge us now, my Lord, with privacy;
This day o'er past—oh, may the sound delight!
My embassies of thee must audience ask.

EDWARD.

Farewell my beauteous and beloved Albina!
How dear, how precious, doth the time become,
Teeming with happiness like mine! To leave
A Moment now, seems a lost Day in love. [*Exit.*

Enter GONDIBERT.

Th' obtruder pardon, Madam, who, unbidden,
Breaks on your happy hours.

ALBINA.

This stern excuse,
And that impassion'd air, seem meant for chiding;
Such looks sit strangely on a Brother's brow,
Are most unkind!

GONDIBERT.

Smiles, and unruffled looks,
Become those favoured youths who at the feet
Of placid Beauty may——oh! Raimond, Pardon!
Fain would I speak to thee with utmost calm,
But, tides of passion bear me from my aim!

ALBINA.

Of what would'st speak?

GONDIBERT.

Of Him.

ALBINA.

Of whom? Lord Edward?

GONDIBERT.

Yes, Edward! he——your Paramour!

ALBINA.

How's this?
Is this, this rude, reproof from Gondibert!

GONDIBERT.

From whom then should it, Madam, but his Brother
Whose Memory you hold so light? These Sables
Ill suit the vivid spirit of your eye;
Your air, as ill, the sober guise of widowhood.

ALBINA.

My Lord, a Brother's privilege you stretch
Beyond due reach. Doth Gondibert presume—
Does he Albina dare accuse in words
That would befit the loosest of her sex!

(*Turns aside.*)

GONDIBERT.

The probe of truth gives Pain, but, bear it still.
The public voice condemns so prompt a marriage,
And maidens blush, that she, who lately shone
The bright the envied sample of her sex,
Now sudden, like a flighty fawn, o'ersprings
The prison fence she painfully endured.

ALBINA.

Tears would disgrace me now! Bethink you, Sir,
'Tis Raimond's widow whom you thus insult!
'Tis his, your Brother's, honour that you wound
With these base taunts.—I do believe you're false;
The public voice dares not arraign my conduct—
Or, if it did!—the Brother of Lord Raimond
Their slander ought to punish, not avow.

GONDIBERT.

Oh! he would trample on the slanderer
Of Raimond's *faithful* Widow, with his blood
With life itself defend her name, her honour.
—To imputations cast on Edward's Wife!
He can unmoved, and unrevenged, give ear.

ALBINA.

The Wife of Edward needs no other arm;
He will protect me—He's my guard and champion.

GONDIBERT.

Then arm him! and, in me behold the Guard,
The Champion of dead Raimond's tarnish'd Name,
Dishonoured by this Love.

ALBINA.

Ah! dishonoured!
Where's the proud Dame that would not deem her Glory
Lord Edward's love? Is there a fame more bright
In Richard's court? His noble Birth were vulgar
View'd with his nobler qualities. His Mind
All skill enriches and bright Virtue guards.

GONDIBERT.

Perish his Fame—his Virtues! He's my Hate.

ALBINA.

Let him shun *me*, who harbours hate for Edward!
Farewell, my Lord! Henceforward he, alone,
Can meet a welcome here, who pays just tribute
To Edward's worth. [*Exit.*

GONDIBERT.

Oh, stay—Albina, stay!
Ah, gone!—By fierce impetuous passion slaved,
What have I done? I've urged her on to Hatred,
In the sole moment that my fate allowed
To win her from the purpose that undoes me.
Fool! fool! were such the Arts I had devised?
Fury and Threats are ye the wiles of Love?
My Fate I've fixed, Albina will be his!
Hold, hold, my tortured Brain—one Hope's still left;
Means still remain shall Marriage bar, or me
Shall snatch from woe.—I'll Edward challenge,
He falls, or I; and which—to me is equal! (*Going*)
(*Enter* ELFRIDA.)

ELFRIDA.

(*Aside.*—My hopes demand that Edward's life be saved!) (*Seizes his Wrist*)
Thou dupe of fury, victim of blind rage!
Why challenge Edward to the Lists?

GONDIBERT.

My Vengeance, and my Love, demand the trial;
Both must be satisfied, or me destroyed.

ELFRIDA.

Obey their impulse, be revenged—and happy!
But still, Life risk not on a Rival's sword.

GONDIBERT.

What now?—Ah! meanly steal a Coward's triumph,
My sword's fair claim resign for ambush'd vict'ry—
Creep an Assassin on his guardless hours!

ELFRIDA.

Still, wilfully, my Lord, you wrest my words.
No plot against his Life I form—then hear me;
On what Pretences canst thou challenge Edward?
Wilt thou proclaim thy Love for Raimond?—No.
At the report of such unsanction'd flame
The public ear revolts. Yet still, methinks,
He should not win Albina.

GONDIBERT.

Should! say shall not!

ELFRIDA.

With what an insolent Content he left her;
He passed me, but too full of bliss was he,
To see an object less than his Albina.
Sudden it struck me—Now, with how much ease,
This haughty joy might be exchanged for woe!
The heart, now swelling with triumphant Love,
A little word that taints it with Suspicion,
Like serpents' venom, soon would change its state!
Suspicion, well awaked, doth n'er find sleep!

GONDIBERT.

Suspicion of Albina!

ELFRIDA.

Yes—Suspicion.
Infuse its poison—'twill be balm to Thee!

GONDIBERT.

Impossible!—the clearest Lilly grown,
Where ne'er obtrusive eye has ever roam'd,

Boasts less unsullied pureness than her mind.

ELFRIDA.

Though, to the World, she spotless may appear
As mountain snow, yet—could no dubious tint
By a suspicious HUSBAND be discerned!
Lord Raimond may have trusted Gondibert,
With fears which he kept chary from the world;
Or, may not you in some unguarded moment,
Admitted by a Brother's rights, have caught
Her pure ear list'ning to the secret suit
Of some young Paramour?

GONDIBERT.

Ah!

ELFRIDA.

Your tried Honour
Would stamp the tale with Signet of its truth,
Would force Conviction on his heart, and chase
Each Prejudice that passion could retain
To plead in Beauty's cause.

GONDIBERT.

'Tis conflict dread!
How fierce the passion, dreadful the despair,
That sinks my haughty soul to arts so mean?
Deceit! till now a stranger to my heart,
Welcome with all thy wiles! distil thy poison
To canker Edward's peace.- - - - Oh, still impossible!
A Look, a Tone, of her's, would quick confute
The wiliest tale that malice could suggest.

ELFRIDA.

Let him be tainted with a tinge of Jealousy—
Each Tone, each Look, will be an added Proof!

GONDIBERT.

Should he be wrought to such unjust belief,
Not he alone, but all around, would scorn her,
The slander-culling Maid, the Wife, the Hypocrite,
Whilst the loose Wantons hail, with impious joy,
A Sister in Albina! 'Twere distracting!
That Form, beheld by the admiring world
With chaste Respect, shall it, with loose Contempt

Be gazed on? Shall th' angelic mind of her
My soul adores e'er feel the sting, the taunt,
Of scorn!

ELFRIDA.

That scorn must be thy hope, thy Comfort!
Think on the feelings of that grateful hour,
When Raimond, drooping, sunk, oppressed by shame
The world will lavish on her guiltless head,
By Edward left—abandoned by her Father,
The eye of Nature, Virtue, Friendship, shut,
In thee alone finds Love, Respect, and Justice!
Beholds thee sooth her woes, and share her anguish,
Discover fresh delights, new joys invoke
For their sweet antidotes to poisonous Grief—
Accomplish this! content with bounteous fate.

GONDIBERT.

Oh, 'twere sufficient luxury of bliss!
I'd steal her sorrows, rob her of her griefs,
And give her, in exchange, soft peace and love.
But, oh! it could not be; me she'd regard
With a cold Sister's brow.

ELFRIDA.

'Tis said, that Love
Hath eagle sight, and glances can define,
And the soft Language of a blush explain;
But, eyes and blushes spoke in vain to you,
Or you read most perversely!

GONDIBERT.

Ah! what say'st?
I charge thee, lead not to such dangerous hope—
Yet, tell me—

ELFRIDA.

Tell thee! Strange, that Gondibert,
He who can penetrate the veil of policy,
Detect the Sophist's art, and trace the chain
Whose hidden links controul the Will of man,
That he should need be told, what not to know
Argues gross blindness, or fixed will to err.

GONDIBERT.

Blindness to what? Elfrida, speak—Explain!

ELFRIDA.

Recal then to your mind the marriage months
Of her first Lord.—Did never then complaint,
No word ambiguous, e'er escape his lips,
Reflecting on the Coldness of Albina?

GONDIBERT.

Her coldness—ah!—What then?

ELFRIDA.

Nay, answer me!
Can you remember?

GONDIBERT.

Yes! I've ne'er forgot,
That, as he feasted once my greedy ear
With praises of his Bride, he sudden stopt,
And, with a sigh, a sigh which seemed t' escape
From his heart's centre, said—Yet! Gondibert,
All good and beauteous as she is—but yet
Her icy heart with true love's uninspired.

ELFRIDA.

Albina's heart was to her husband cold,
Aye!—for a happier youth alone 'twould flame.
A happy youth, unconscious of his sway,
The Countess loved—blind Gondibert was he!

GONDIBERT.

Then, I'm self-ruin'd!—oh! it cannot be;
Albina loved not me—or, if she did,
Tell me, perfidious woman! torturous! tell
Why didst the Secret until now conceal—
Why now reveal it?

ELFRIDA.

To confirm your purpose;
Me hath compassion to your griefs impell'd
Now to reveal a confidence reposed—
No, not reposed; the tale I owe to Chance.

GONDIBERT.

Elfrida! thou awak'st my utmost Soul,
Its faculties its powers in one are merged,

No sense have I but ear.

ELFRIDA.

Oppressed with Cares,
As once upon a couch I had reclined,
To gain a short repose, Albina enter'd.
Tender her look, deep thought was in her eye,
Which, pensively, upon the vacant air
She fixed, then turned it eager on the wall
Where you, a Mars, the living canvas shews,
And, for a while, with ardent gaze, survey'd it.
Then breath'd—"Had I the pencil held, that Helmet
Had been Love's Chaplet; and the uncouth armour
Upon that Form, bright Hymen's flowery robe"—
I started, she espied me, and with shame
O'ercome, and sinking on her knee with fear,
Conjured me, by the love I bore her fame,
By all the sacred Honour of our sex,
Ne'er to divulge, ne'er whisper e'en to air,
The fatal secret, which, through chance, was mine.

GONDIBERT.

It is enough—she loved! Albina loved—
The truth revealed quick flashes on my heart,
And all its regions greet the rapturous guest!
Thousand sweet tokens now afresh start up,
Breaking like sudden sun-beams on my mind.
Blind fool! to feast on Fancy—dream of happiness—
Whilst one, more daring, gains Reality,
And bears it from my arms—my hopes, forever!
(Going.)

ELFRIDA.

Trust me, my Lord, can you but thwart the marriage,
To her First Love she will again return
With heighten'd ardour, and with chidings meet
Thy tardy vows, that gave another leave
To ask the heart she'd fain have given thee.

GONDIBERT.

Oh, 'tis a bribe would tempt my soul to earth
Back from the gates of Paradise. Thou Phantom

Honour! hide thy stern head;—Conscience! go
sleep,
'Till love successful give thee Leave to prate,
Then will I hear thee, will, in Friar's cowl,
My mad sin wail, monastic rigours think
Too slight, too poor, a penance for my joy.

ELFRIDA.

T' escape suspicion's prying eyes we'll part:
When favouring shades of night shall wrap all men
In doubtful semblance, meet me in the garden;
There Edward you shall see, and give his mind
The dread conviction which I mean t'inspire.

GONDIBERT.

Commands, like Mystic Oracles, you give,
Concealing Fate in dark mysterious words;
To thee, sweet Priestess, I resign myself,
Nor dare, beyond what you reveal, enquire.
—Swift flit the hours! until again we meet. [*Exit.*

ELFRIDA.

So!—then to make despairing Love courageous
Is no less easy than t'alarm the Jealous.
—How self-degraded seems now Lordly Man!
A being formed, in nature's Vanity,
To shew how great, how exquisite, her skill,
With Mind so powerful that the Universe
In its vast scheme its reach eludes not,
Lets thus one passion Powers so great absorb,
And yields them all mere slaves to Phantasy! [*Exit.*

ACT

ACT THE THIRD.

Scene I. THE GARDEN.

Elfrida, *seated.*

ELFRIDA.

Lord Gondibert, methinks, is slow! The sun
His last beams darts from the illumined West
Pale twilight ushers pensive Evening on
And he not yet arrived!—Oh! did he feel
The keener jealousies Ambition gives,
He would outstrip a Bridegroom in his haste,
And grudge each moment, as an added Day
Would intervene 'twixt him and happiness.
(*Rising.*)
—A step advances! surely then 'tis he.
Oh, Fortune! aid me in th' approaching conflict!
My fate is busy, and, in cunning guise,
Now weaves the tissue of my future life.
Whate'er th'events, I have a mind shall meet them!
Fearless I launch my bark, at once to sink,
Or ride triumphant through the coming storm.
(*Enter* Egbert.)

EGBERT.

Me pardon, Lady, if I dare disturb,
With step unwish'd, your evening meditation,
I surely may, without offence to Heaven,

E'en draw down pious thought to Earth awhile
To watch o'er Virtue.

ELFRIDA.

Egbert! prithee brief.

EGBERT.

My tale, alas! is fraught with shame and sorrow;
Sorrow that I must yield up him to shame,
Whom to behold to height of Glory raised
All that remains to me of health and life
I'd freely yield. I pray you now conduct me
Strait to Lord Edward and his pledged Albina.

ELFRIDA.

Lord Edward, and the Countess—ah! say wherefore?

EGBERT.

A story to divulge that in their ears
Alone should be reposed.

ELFRIDA.

Methinks your errand
An air suspicious wears; its purport surely
To me you may entrust.

EGBERT.

I well know, Lady,
You long have been the Countess's tried friend,
And that, from you, no Secret in her breast
She locks. This, then, to you shall be disclosed,
Though of much weight, and must be chary kept.

ELFRIDA.

Prithee then quick—

EGBERT.

Lord Gondibert ill bears
To see the widow of his noble Brother
So soon forget his death, and light again
The nuptial torch; he discord means t'excite
Betwixt Lord Edward and his promised bride,
And tales, with this design, hath framed that—

ELFRIDA.

Ah!

EGBERT.

Start not, nor view severely, gentle Lady,
This first, this only, error of his life!
When Time shall dissipate the mist of Passion
He'll then rejoice we saved him from an act
Which all his future days would taint with horror.

ELFRIDA.

Trusts you, then, Gondibert with this design!

EGBERT.

Not with the Circumstance he means to urge:
I drew his purpose from disparted converse.
He hopes to disunite the noble pair
Ere morning dawns.

ELFRIDA.

Is this your errand then?

EGBERT.

This is my errand; to secure their hearts
From fierce distracting pangs, when things are heard
That else might break their troth.

ELFRIDA.

'Tis well, old man!
I now go hence your message to convey,
Await you here the orders I may bring! [*Exit.*

EGBERT.

Heaven! pardon that I break my faith to him,
Whom I am bound to serve;—I serve him now!
I drag him from the very act of guilt,
Which all his future days, in deep remorse
And deeds of virtue spent, could ne'er call back
How deep soe'er 'twere mourn'd.

Enter ELFRIDA, *with* GWILLIM *and other Servants.*

ELFRIDA.

Seize that old traitor!

And instant in the deepest dungeon plunge him;
The Countess wills it.

EGBERT.

Horror! this for me?

ELFRIDA.

For thee; who falsely dost defame thy patron,
Attaint the honour of Lord Gondibert!
Away! nor listen to his prayers.

EGBERT.

Oh, Lady,
Be not thus cruel to my hoary years!
Egbert would Gondibert ne'er hurt—

ELFRIDA.

'Tis false;
For thou, with rude and most unseemly speech,
Didst comments make upon the deeds of him
Whose errors should by thee be hidden, screen'd
From every mortal eye.—Why stand ye loit'ring?
'Tis from your Mistress the command I bring;
With you the peril, if obedience fail!

EGBERT.

Oh! hear me! hear me, for the sake of him—
(*They drag him off.*)

ELFRIDA.

When fools like you will prate, ye must be caged,
Lest ye should babble to the gaping world
Of things ye know not to appreciate.
—To chuse that dotard for a confidant!
Better have told the story at the mart,
Or to the mummers who infest our Halls,
To be by them personified on Eves
And Holidays:—Of this imprisonment
Must not know Gondibert! If he survive
These days of trouble, he may gain release;
Meantime, Discretion he'll be fitly taught. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

ANOTHER PART OF THE GARDEN.

Enter EGBERT *and* GWILLIM.

EGBERT.

Oh, wonder not! that I so slowly move
Towards so sad a home! If I might plead—

GWILLIM.

Master, fear nought! Thou shalt have sleep to night
More sweet than her's, not in a loathsome dungeon,
But, in repose upon thy soothing couch.

EGBERT.

Thank thee! how kind is this, and christianly,
I fear'd you too were leagued for my destruction.

GWILLIM.

Didst thou then think I had forgot the hour
In which you soothed, in my yet infant eyes,
The falling tear, assuaged my grief-swoln heart,
And placed me in Earl Raimond's family,
Where thus to cherish'd Manhood I have grown?
Thou, then, wert my preserver—I'm now thine!

EGBERT.

In truth, surprise and terror so dismayed me,
I knew you not; now that I do, I bless you.

GWILLIM.

Such orders by the Countess ne'er were given;
But proud Elfrida's power makes all unsafe
Who thwart her. In that Grotto thou may'st bide
Till Ev'ning grows more dark; then, use this key,
It leads you to the grove. Farewell, good Egbert!
[*Exit.*

EGBERT.

Farewell, my Friend! tomorow, better thanks
I will present thee. Heaven! 'twas not thy will,
That I should perish for an act of Duty.
Forgive, that thus my Confidence did fail,
And, for a moment, leave me to despair!
(Enters the Grotto.)

Enter GONDIBERT *and* ELFRIDA.

(During this scene, the Light gradually withdraws.)

GONDIBERT.

The bright design exceeds my utmost hope!
Some sympathetic Spirit, once mere man
Subject to Passion's sway, the scheme inspired,
In largess'd pity to my tort'rous pains
Bestowed the vision on thy quick'ning brain!
—Thou who thy welfare thus for me dost hazard
How can I gift thee for thy generous aid?

ELFRIDA.

To your great Brother I incurred the debt
That I have now existence. 'Tis but just
That I, for you, risk welfare he bestowed.

GONDIBERT.

But where is now this Edward, who hath thrust,
'Twixt me and my felicity, his claim?
—Though thou on pedestal of fame art perch'd
And boast'st thy fate in such a glorious stand,
Edward, be-are! or I will have thee down
Though crush'd with thee in fall.—Say where he is?

ELFRIDA.

With Raimond, cheering now, perchance, his fancy
With the bright prospect of tomorrow's fate.

GONDIBERT.

Ne'er shall that morrow come, or, if it doth,
The coursing sun, that cheers them at the Altar,

Shall finish his diurnal round in blood.

ELFRIDA.

Try bloodless means; give Circumstance and Proof.

GONDIBERT.

Aye, stunning proof; such as would shake a faith
Germ'd in the heart ere first its pulses beat.
No Tale related, though with deepest skill,
Garnish'd with circumstance and every turn
Of art, could mar or for a moment throw
The slightest doubt on noble Raimond's fame.
But, Demonstration's self shall force thee Edward
To convict deem her sex's paragon,
And yield her to thy raptur'd Rival's wish.

ELFRIDA.

Still, tale and circumstance will have their weight,
And make his mind absorbent of the proof,
Or else, as well dart arrows 'gainst a rock,
To shiver or rebound. I go to watch
Till he retires; I'll then direct him hither.
Be sure you mark each motion of his Heart,
Probe without mercy every mental wound,
And torture him till, through his agony,
He'll hate to think of her.

GONDIBERT.

But, stirr'd up rage
May prompt him on the instant to accuse!

ELFRIDA.

To counteract such transports be my care.
This lab'ring brain, my Lord, hath not so framed
The set design, for blund'ring Chance to mar.
Can I depend upon your Servants' skill,
Their Faith, and Fortitude?

GONDIBERT.

All, all, secure.

ELFRIDA.

Enough, all's well. The Dress, prepared, you'll find.

Her Antichamber, at the Signal, enter;
Noise must ne'er reach her in the Inner Room.
—The rest, some Demon to our wishes guide!
[*Exit.*

GONDIBERT.

Dreadful the race!—but, Raimond is the prize!
Not Man, unguarded Nature, be accused,
Who to temptation yields our minds for prey,
Hath hung us round with Senses exquisite
And traitor Passions planted in the heart
Through which the Senses make resistless war
On poor, betrayed, defenceless, Virtue!
—The night grows dark! the Moon conceals her Orb,
Omitting with her lucid beams to gild
This act of fraud. Through thick umbrageous trees,
In hollow murmurs whistling Eurus speaks,
Around the wheeling bat her circles draws,
And dismal fancy, in yon shadowy ailes
Might conjure up an hundred startling forms!
How deep is fixed our dawning years' impression;
The tales of Conscience-stirring sprites, that awed
Weak Infancy, now rush upon my mind,
And, spite of haughty Reason, make it shrink!
Who is't approaches?—
(*Enter Edward.*)

EDWARD.

Edward.

GONDIBERT.

Gondibert.

EDWARD.

What means this summons, at so late an hour?
I seek you here sent by the fair Elfrida
To hear related Secrets of much pith,
To be confided to my private ear.

GONDIBERT.

Could I intrust them, Edward, to your ear,
So that the poison of the words I utter

Descend not to your Heart—I'd, boldly, speak.

EDWARD.

Surely a tale, thus guarded and hemm'd in
With words so circumspect, hath serious import—
Intruded Business suits not hours like these!
My soul now banquets on felicity,
And, all its faculties absorbed in bliss,
'Tis raised to such exalted height it scorns
So low a thought as Care.—Farewell, my friend,
You'll be our guest tomorrow, welcome guest,
Upon the happiest morn old Time e'er gave.
(*Going.*)

GONDIBERT.

I charge thee, stay!—thou arrogant of bliss
My tale may bar the hymeneal feast.

EDWARD.

Say'st thou!—Nought can, e'en for a single hour,
Suspend the bliss of calling Raimond mine!

GONDIBERT.

Amazement furrows deep thy brow; but, Edward,
Albina never can be thine!—Ah! would
The Countess meant not change of state! I swear
My ever cautious tongue ne'er then had told—
But, Edward, thou'rt on sudden ruin's edge!
'Tis that excites my voice to warn thee.

EDWARD.

Thy words have formed strange Chaos in my soul;
There something lurks beneath their doubtful phrase
I dread to hear, yet, ask thee to unfold.

GONDIBERT.

Then, summon Fortitude!

EDWARD.

Thou tortur'st—speak!

GONDIBERT.

My Brother's Widow is of mould so tender,
It freely lists a Lover's melting plea,

Nor owns an attribute so harsh as cruelty.

EDWARD.

Her virtuous Tenderness!—Is't unknown to me?
E'en now she promised half reluctant love,
In tone of gentle Pity sweet as note
Of Philomel whose music in the ear
Of twilight list'ner makes departing beams
Of glaring day full grateful to his eye.
Why then, to me, mysteriously descant
Upon her tenderness?

GONDIBERT.

Oh! more than thee
Her tenderness with healing Pity views;
And to a secret Lover—

EDWARD.

Silence! Slanderer!

GONDIBERT.

Truce, in a Soldier, to such female rage.

EDWARD.

Truce, reas'ning coward, to thy blasphemy!
(*Draws.*)

GONDIBERT.

Coward!—thou canst not, shall not, think me thus!

EDWARD.

Then guard thee! or I'll grave it in thy heart!

GONDIBERT.

Ah! come then on, plunge in thy weapon deep;
Be sure take heed thou dost not miss the spot
Where ill judged friendship, in that heart, doth Edward
Transform to Gondibert's assassin.

EDWARD.

Ah!

GONDIBERT.

Shrink not! appease your anger with my blood,
Then, to Albina, boast of having slain
The man who had unveil'd her to your eyes.

She'll fawn upon thee, cozen thee, and gull,
With the fond vows that have, in other ears,
Shed their sweet poison.

EDWARD.

Should my Father's spirit
From heaven descend t'abet thee in the tale,
E'en then I'd deem it false.

GONDIBERT.

Nay then, I crave,
Think it rank falsehood, phantom of my brain.
The tale's beyond your Nerve, I pray, no more,
Calm night to you, my Lord.

EDWARD.

Hold! Gondibert.
Why what impels this frame of mine to tremble!
I will have all! though every word you speak
Steal like a chilly poison through my veins—
So on!

GONDIBERT.

She, who aspires to be thy Bride,
Means but to shield the guilty favour shown
A low-born favorite.

EDWARD.

Now, thou *dost* lie!
By Heaven such purity was never formed
Of frail material. Her gentle passions
Are like soft zephyrs of a vernal morn
That wake the Beauties of the blushing rose,
Her every thought's inspired by Chastity.

[*Gondibert draws. They advance on each other.*

Enter ELFRIDA.

ELFRIDA.

What dreadful broil breaks through the sombre night?
Shield me!

GONDIBERT.

Intrusion!—In the morn we'll meet.
Though it delay the hour the Priest expects thee,
Yet at the Altar, when thou eager meet'st
Thy chiding Bride, thou may'st atonement make,
And with the marriage ring present your sword
Stained with the blood of him whose truths unwelcome
To rob her of her Husband vainly strove. [*Exit.*

EDWARD.

Didst know, Elfrida, when you sent me hither,
The purport of that villain's tale?

ELFRIDA.

Your looks
Affright me from the truth!—restore your sword.
Fain, fain would I escape the dreadful task;
My Duty to the Countess binds my tongue—
Spare me you must, my Lord.

EDWARD.

I charge thee, speak!
By all the friendship which I bear to thee,
I charge thee, spare me not—all tell—tell all!

ELFRIDA.

Then I confess me privy to the counsel,
That Gondibert, to you, designed to offer;
Honour demands you well to be aware!

EDWARD.

Dost thou say this, Elfrida? thou who know'st
Each cherish'd secret of her heart!

ELFRIDA.

I do.
And what I've said with Proof sustain.

EDWARD.

Of what!

ELFRIDA.

That you will only share Albina's love!
Those minds imbued by vice with deepest stains

Are often masked in Forms almost divine,
Deck'd forth in words and looks, that Virtue's self
Might challenge for her own—such is Albina.

EDWARD.

If this is true, my bane then art thou Truth!
Falshood is kind, Deceit! shield me again
With thick impervious folds. Thou busy one!
Why rouze me from a lethargy of bliss?—
Yet, I'll have Truth; if thou hast proof, present it,
If not, than Lightning swifter fly——oh, no!
But say thou'rt false, I'll press thee to my heart!

ELFRIDA.

Dare you abide the proof! Know that a Youth
In love successful now hath long possessed
Albina's secret hours—

EDWARD.

Oh! what self-felon
Could take advantage of relying love,
On one base hazard venture such a treasure
To be now bankrupt both of bliss and honour!

ELFRIDA.

To love with Honour niggard Fate denied;
In mien Adonis, he's of Birth so low,
Her Father, nay e'en She, would spurn at Marriage.
—No time is there for pause and management,
Abrupt the Proof must burst upon your mind.
Didst thou but dare look on, then, e'en this night
Unto her chamber thou might'st see him hie.

EDWARD.

My brain 'twould madden!—Now! thou bear'st me down.

ELFRIDA.

If but the Thought o'ercome—avoid all Proof!

EDWARD.

Traitress! Some hell-sprung fiend doth prompt thee on—

ELFRIDA.

My Duty proferr'd, conscience-quit I go.
(Departing.)

EDWARD.

Nay, I will with thee, that I may confute
This daring proof that innocence is guilt! [*Exeunt.*

Enter EGBERT, *from the Grotto.*

And, is this Woman I have seen? Is't Woman!
Whom Nature hath with gentlest feelings gifted,
With Nerves of finest tone, to feel each woe
And lead it to the Heart! Oh, I'm abash'd
That I stand kindred in creation's scale
With such a being!——Haply was I witness
To league so base. Now, in the toils, Elfrida,
Which thou did'st spread for me, thyself art fallen!
Through our own acts thus Heaven punishes,
And makes our crimes the Sources of our Woe.
[*Exit.*

SCENE III.

A SUITE OF APARTMENTS.

The Door of Albina's apartment is seen, through the folding doors of an Antichamber.

Enter EDWARD *and* ELFRIDA.

ELFRIDA.

Conceal yourself near this. The hour's arrived
In which the Countess usually retires;
Now, summon up your Sex's Fortitude!
—To me your Honor's giv'n in sacred pledge
Whate'er occurs you'll silently observe,
By interference ne'er betray my Aid! [*Exit.*

EDWARD.

Now Heaven!—But fear mars prayer—my sinking
Heart
Scarce yields me life to breathe—and dizzy forms
In shape imperfect swim before my eyes.
—She comes! Behold her Slander! waste no shaft,
Her Chastity is evident as Truth,
It glows it animates each speaking line
Of features eloquent of virtuous thought.

(He withdraws through a door in the side, near the doors of the Antichamber.)

Enter ALBINA, ELFRIDA, *and* ATTENDANTS.

ELFRIDA.

Shall I attend you, Countess, to your chamber?

ALBINA.

No, my Elfrida, for you need Repose,
Your pensive mind hath suffered much since Morn
From the sad image of misfortunes past.
Forget all now, and be by sweet Sleep soothed.

[Exeunt Elfrida, and Attendants removing the Lights. ALBINA *passes through the Antichamber, and enters her Apartment at the end of it.—Re-enter* EDWARD.

EDWARD.

There's the pure temple that conceals my love.
If she were naught, Nature, in league with Vice,
Hath each Charm Raimond's made, and Virtue left
Without Attraction.——Silence reigns around.
Now, on this spot will I with patience count
The lagging moments of the night, to triumph
In the sure failure of the promised proof.
Ah—hark! My ear on guard naught now escapes,
The clicking death-watch, or the passing air,

Hath now a sound that chills. (*Withdraws as before.*)

(A PAUSE.)

GONDIBERT *enters cloak'd, and passing down the Stage proceeds watchfully into the Antichamber, where he is perceived by the Audience alarmed lest he should be followed and seen remaining there by* EDWARD, *who advances drawing his Sword.*

EDWARD.

Death to the Villain!

ELFRIDA *enters from the opposite side and throws herself between* EDWARD *and the doors of the Antichamber, before he can reach them so as to see* GONDIBERT *remaining within.*

ELFRIDA.

Cease! cease, my Lord—or me you will destroy!

EDWARD.

Destruction on thee, so it reach but him!
(*Enter* GONDIBERT'S *Servants.*)

ELFRIDA.

Oh! drag him from the spot. Here, help, assist!
Your sacred honour's pledged to me for Silence—
My Lord, 'tis ruin to me this!
[*They force him back, and off the Stage.*

GONDIBERT. (*coming forward.*)
'Tis done!
His efforts failed, my Form escaped his eye,
Our victim struggles in our toils in vain! [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I. AN APARTMENT IN WESTMORELAND'S PALACE.

Enter OSWALD, *Steward to Westmoreland, and Servants.*

OSWALD.

Haste to Paul's Cross; and, be you sure, at Seven,
The Fountain spouts with Wine—spouts in full stream,
As copious as the noble donor's bounty.
Observe, when weak or aged folk you see
Pressed by the boisterous multitude, assist them,
And let not sturdy ones take double shares.

First SERVANT.

I will be mindful of your rule. [*Exit.*

OSWALD.

'Tis well.
You, Elwyn, for the populace select
An Ox well fed. For a remembering token
Of this most happy day let not the poor
Dine on poor food.

Second SERVANT.

I'll chuse the best. [*Exit.*

OSWALD.

Have the old pensioners received their raiment?

Third SERVANT.

Marry they have, and with o'erflowing hearts.

OSWALD.

'Tis thus our noble Master doth rejoice!
Whate'er brings joy or happiness to him,
Is pledge of joy to all within his reach.
Were his Lands bounded only by the Seas
That girt our isle, he hath a Heart as wide.
—See, he approaches! with a face as gladsome
As though he had redeemed from rav'nous Time
His own blest nuptial morn.

(*Enter Westmoreland.*)

WESTMORELAND.

Come, come; no Mirth
No Bustling with ye? Are the cooks all busy?
Is the Hall trimm'd and ready for the guests?

OSWALD.

Throughout the Household, all is as you wish.

WESTMORELAND.

Then all shall feel content this happy morn;
And the dejected eye of yielding sorrow
Be raised with sparkling gratitude to Heaven.
But, where's thy joy? Thou art as old and grave
As if this only were a common morn,
Is't not Albina's wedding-day? Cast off
Thy Age, and be a boy! Not sportive youth
Shall go beyond old Westmoreland to-day
In all the rounds of gay festivity.

OSWALD.

My Heart doth take its part, my honor'd Lord,
In all the happiness that beams around you.
—Behold the Sov'reign of the feast, Lord Edward!

[*Exit.*

(*Enter Edward.*)

WESTMORELAND.

Hail to my Son! Hail to this chosen morn
This morn of bliss! These are a Bridegroom's hours

Thou seem'st impatient of the lingering dial.

EDWARD.

Sorrow, like Joy, impatient of the hours
Still presses onward to a change of time!

WESTMORELAND.

Who talks of Sorrow on a Bridal Morn?
Your tones, methinks, th' occasion ill become!

EDWARD.

They suit too well the tenor of my mind!
Alas! thou view'st me here no happy Bridegroom
With ardor waiting and impatient joy
To hail his blushing Bride! But, a sad wretch
Who hates the day for breaking on his woe!

WESTMORELAND.

My Joy hath been too powerful for my Age!
Thy words do strike mine ear; but Reason, scared,
Withholds her faculty, their Import sees not.

EDWARD.

Oh, look not thus! My tale will rive thy heart.

WESTMORELAND.

My Child!—Albina!

EDWARD.

Dread the very worst!
That, when the worst doth come, you may support
Its horror!

WESTMORELAND.

Quickly speak—my child is well?

EDWARD.

She is.

WESTMORELAND.

Then what dread blow hath Heaven in store?
Through her alone I can affliction know—
If she be well, what ill can light on me?

EDWARD.

All ill!

WESTMORELAND.

Oh, speak! what labours in thy breast?

EDWARD.

A deadly poison!—I no longer can—
Last Night!

WESTMORELAND.

Speak—speak! What's ambush'd in thy words?

EDWARD.

Oh Memory—dread record!—Ah! to forget!
Crimes from the conscience easier 'twere to clear;
The wrath of Heaven's by penitence appeased,
But what, retentive brain, could raze from thee
Such ills when once they're register'd? Albina!
To expiate thy Guilt my heart should yield
Its vital stream.

WESTMORELAND.

Guilt! Join her name with Guilt!
How I'll revenge me that thou thus hast dared!

EDWARD.

Thy honest rage I bend to with Respect,
And, whilst my heart by equal griefs is torn,
It pities thee unhappy Westmoreland!
My faith in her withstood mere Language—but
These eyes beheld him haste unto her chamber!

WESTMORELAND.

Whom sayst thou—thou beheld'st?

EDWARD.

I knew him not
In night concealed. But—

WESTMORELAND.

Cease thy impious tongue!
Thou to its venom shalt be Antidote.
Though thou hast been deceived, and though to guile
thee
Each Scheme that wickedness could frame were
practised,

On thee alone my Chastisement shall fall.
Thou shouldst have questioned ev'ry testimony,
Doubted each sense, and, though they all combined,
Contemn'd them all—ere thou had'st dared to cast
On Chastity the stain that, once infixed,
Mere Innocence cant cleanse. My child, though widowed,
Has still Protection—and her Champion I—
I, dare thee to the Field!

EDWARD.

I dare refuse
Thy vent'rous challenge, weak, though good, old Earl.
What! *prove* Albina in the face of day
Disgraced!—e'en her on whose pure chastity
Within a few short hours I would have staked
My every Hope!

WESTMORELAND.

Aye, cozen female rage!
But know ye, Edward, me?—I'm Westmoreland!
In our long Line of Noble Ancestry
Not one base act hath blurr'd the haughty Name,
Or tainting slander dared to breathe on it.
Unsullied I received the glorious heritance,
And will bequeath it, spotless, to the world—
Thy blood shall flow to cleanse away the stain!

EDWARD.

Would'st thou oppose thy waning life to mine?
Thou dost forget, old Lord, that winters oft
Have left their hoary fleeces on thy head
Since thou wert meet to match with one who boasts
Th' unslacken'd nerves of youth.

WESTMORELAND.

Thy vaunted nerve
I do despise. Heaven grants the strength of Youth
Shall yield to that of Virtue in the field.
This wither'd arm, in my Albina's cause,

Shall soon uncrown thee of the Laurel wreathe
That rests disgraced upon thy faithless brow.

EDWARD.

Disgraced indeed, when spotted with thy blood!
Thy proferr'd gauntlet therefore I refuse.
Is it my Death you seek? I will, this day,
To welcome death, for Palestine depart.

WESTMORELAND.

Contemptuous Boy! I'll force thee do me right.
I'll instant to our Sovereign, and demand
The Law of Honour ere thou dost embark! [*Exit.*

EDWARD.

Is this my Bridal Morn? Ye tender ties
Where are ye fled? The Sun of Happiness
That blazed but yesterday will rise no more.
Be Life extinguished too! Good Westmoreland,
From contest with thy honour'd arm I shrink,
But not to live. To Holy Land I'll speed
To bear me as a Soldier.—Oh, Albina!
The sword that must be buried in my heart
'Tis thou wilt give the victory to; the frame,
The Saracen may wound, 'tis thou unnerv'st! [*Exit.*

Enter WESTMORELAND, *leading* ALBINA *in a Bridal Habit.*

WESTMORELAND.

My poor child, home—ah! thou must home again,
Put off thy bridal vest, resume thy weeds,
For thou art widow'd still.

ALBINA.

What means my Father!

WESTMORELAND.

Oh! why didst yield to thy weak Father's suit?
He pleaded for a villain.

ALBINA.

A Villain, Sir!

What mean these dreadful sounds? who villain—
Edward!

WESTMORELAND.

E'en he; thou too wilt think him so!

ALBINA.

Oh! no.
The brightest Honour doth exalt his mind.
In him, 'tis not a scope of moral Words,
Or Schoolmen's Speeches—but, instinctive Soul,
That starts from baseness, as Annihilation.

WESTMORELAND.

Alas! my Child, I judge him from—himself.
How shall I tell thee?

ALBINA.

What?

WESTMORELAND.

Thou art rejected!
Yes, he rejects thee—nay he hath accused—
Westmoreland hath lived to hear his child accused—

ALBINA.

Support me, Heaven!—accused? speak, say, of
What?

WESTMORELAND.

The shame will burn thy modest cheek—he dares—
Deny thee chaste!

ALBINA.

What! Edward—me!

WESTMORELAND.

Yes, thee!
Thee, in whose bosom Chastity is thron'd,
Thou, the bright Model of a female mind,
By Edward art accused of Licence vile—

ALBINA.

Ah! Fate most dreadful!

(Sinking into her Father's arms.)

WESTMORELAND.

Let Pride sustain thee!
O'er thy base slanderer Justice shall have sway.

ALBINA.

Last night I recollect when, summon'd from me,
He'd passed beyond the reach of tender sounds,
He stopt, his eyes then glancing up to Heaven,
He raised his hands with emphasis of Action
Its Blessings on Albina to invoke.
Had he conceived a Doubt—

WESTMORELAND.

He *has* no Doubt—
He dares not doubt the Honour of my child!
But the rich Prize, which, whilst at Distance placed
Almost beyond the stretches of his Hope,
Seemed worthy his Ambition to attain,
Now, view'd at hand, palls on his sickly taste,
The blessing, then aspired to, he contemns.

ALBINA.

Is't then for this I rose at early Dawn
To bless perfidious Edward? Is't for this
I gave consent, ere Custom might allow,
Again to be a Bride?—unequal'd Ingrate!

WESTMORELAND.

Take heart, my Girl! thy Father swears thy Fame
Shall not be wronged.

ALBINA.

By him I'd given my heart to
Forsaken, scorn'd, left like a loathed disease!
Oh, to som Convent's dreary cell I'll fly,
And there forever hide my shame, and grief!

WESTMORELAND.

First shall be sacrificed a thousand Edwards;
Thy Virtue shall be proved, and my Albina
Live through a race of blissful years in Honour,
E'en now I hasten to the King, to claim
The Sacred Rights of Knighthood.

ALBINA.

My Lord! (*agitated.*)

WESTMORELAND.

I've challenged Edward to the Lists,
There to yield proof that my Albina's virtue
Spotless is, unquestion'd as her Beauty.

ALBINA.

What hear I now!—my Father yield his breast
To Edward's sword! Edward! whose skill in arms
Leaves him unrival'd in the Lists of fame!
Ah! save me from the Horror of the thought!

WESTMORELAND.

Dismiss all Fears! Thy Father's arm hath humbled
Men mightier than he. This breast hath marks,
Marks honorable, graved by swords of Heroes—
And shall a Boy with contumely use me!

ALBINA.

Horror! Distraction! Oh, (*kneeling*) if my soul's peace
Be dear to thee, avoid the dreadful combat.
My mighty Wrongs I will, with Patience, bear,
But Father! Sir! with Griefs my Mind o'erpower not!
Oh! risk not lives so dear!—Whoe'er doth vanquish
Makes me the wretched Victim of his arm.

WESTMORELAND.

Dost Edward's Life, beyond thine Honour, prize!

ALBINA.

Oh, frown not thus! I'll tear him from my heart;
Detest him as I would the haunts of vice,
If thou'lt not make thy child a Parricide!

WESTMORELAND.

Thy Innocence insures thy father's Life!
Armed thus by thee, I'd dauntless meet a Legion.

ALBINA.

Canst thou expect a Miracle to save you!

As Man thou'lt perish.—Oh! and should indeed
A miracle be wrought to prove the Truth,
Then Edward dies!

WESTMORELAND.

Ah! could'st thou wish thy Slanderer
Thy Fame's assassin to survive his Crime
I would disclaim thee. Shall a Westmoreland!
She, who doth carry in her veins the blood
Of royal races, whose high Ancestors
Gave Honour to the Sceptres that they bore,
Shall she, when thus accused, be unsustained
As though she sprang but from ignoble Hinds!

ALBINA.

My sainted Mother, from thy blest abode
Give thy Protection to thy wretched Child!
Sustain me, help me, in this trying hour,
My tottering Mind lest Horror overturn
And leave me wildered in a Maze of Phrenzy!

WESTMORELAND.

This yielding Sorrow, Daughter, ill becomes thee,
It ill becomes thy Wrongs, thy Birth, thy Virtue;
Recal thy Fortitude, think who thou art,
And prove thee worthy of the Space thou fill'st!

ALBINA.

Oh Father! Heaven! whither turn for succour?
His heart a Father steels, and Heaven forsakes me!
All things are wild!—is this not Nature's wreck?—
These new contending struggles are full strong!
With images so fierce they seize my Brain
They'll burst the narrow mansion that confines them,
Drive Reason from her throne, and fix her Slave
To every wildest fiercest Phantasy! [*Exit.*

WESTMORELAND.

'Twixt Honour, Nature, how shall I decide?
Obeying one, I may destroy my Child,
And, yielding to the other's powerful claims,
I render her to Shame. Must I do this?
Thy Father yield thee to Dishonour? No!

First, I'll clear off the venom'd taint of Slander,
Revive the wonted Lustre of thy Fame,
Then, if thou fall'st, sink with thee to the Grave!
[*Exit.*

SCENE II.

AN APARTMENT IN GONDIBERT'S PALACE.

Enter GONDIBERT.

Oh! 'tis with Heart appall'd I meet the Day-beams.
—Thou racking Conscience! how thou torturest
The breast where thou hast mildly reigned till now!
A dreadful night is passed, wherein, if chance
A slumber for a moment closed my eyes,
Sad images of woe inspired such sorrow
That better 'twere to wake to real grief.
—And whence these new-sprung torments? What! have I
With chill eye glanced upon a bosom friend
Beneath Oppression's fierce o'erwhelming crush?
Deprived the weeping Orphan of his bread?
Or steep'd my hand in Murder? None of these!
I've been a Child, and lied to keep a toy
Of which another would have surely robbed me.
I'm weaker e'en than Woman, not a Girl
Who would not laugh at such nice o'erstrain'd feeling
For crimes 'mongst Lovers put in practice daily—
Down, down, Disturber!—Ah! my Fate's bright Genius! (*Enter* ELFRIDA.)
Ne'er lurked Misfortune 'neath an air so sweet.

ELFRIDA.

There spoke thy coz'ning Sex, whose Guile and Flattery
Give witch'ry to their tongues.

GONDIBERT.

Talk not of Man,
But Sovereign Woman; Tidings of Albina!

ELFRIDA.

Array'd in bridal pomp, and light in step,
Joy beaming from her eye, whilst Happiness
Exulted in her brow, she left her palace—
But, mournful Widow, soon returned!

GONDIBERT.

Be quick!

ELFRIDA.

Edward, deluded by our last night's guile,
Resigns his willing bride! remands her back.
To lonely Widowhood, or the soft cares
Of some more happy Lover!

GONDIBERT.

Perhaps to me!
Strait will I hasten to the charming Mourner,
Help her t'upbraid perfidious, changing, Man,
My whole sex brand, her Spleen to gratify,
And, when her hatred to due fury mounts,
Seize on the instant of tumultuous Passion
To lure her back to Love and Gondibert.

ELFRIDA.

Hold, hold, my Lord! such Rashness would undo
you—
Beware of proud, vindictive, Westmoreland!
A single glance, to his suspicious eye,
Would be an index to our secret guile.
He hath a faculty to see men's souls
As though exposed in written character,
And thoughts, e'en ere full formed, can freely read;
Avoid this danger, if you can be wise!

GONDIBERT.

Seek Wisdom in the squalid Monk's abode
Where students sallow by the wasting lamp;
In me each buoyant Passion is sprung up
To Nature's highest pitch, my law—their impulse.
(*Going.*)

ELFRIDA.

Beware! and let me home, my Lord, to watch
Th' adventures of our house, and give you pledge
When every Danger's past. Why deem me Friend,
And yet not trust to my solicitude?

GONDIBERT.

Why, then, I yield; farewell my Guardian Spirit.
But, count the moments by the Lover's dial,
Where hours are Years!

ELFRIDA.

Soon shall you backward count.
Then on Love's Dial happy Years will seem
To fleeting Minutes shrunk. [*Exit.*

GONDIBERT.

For Edward now
And Art; art to conceal my doating thoughts,
And hide them in the guise of soothing Pity.
A few hours only will our shores contain him;
Mean time, that he and his Albina meet not
T' exchange Reproaches, is my only care,
That point attained, high rapture all the rest!
(*Going.*)

Enter EGBERT.

EGBERT.

I come, my Lord, th' unwilling messenger
Of tidings grievous! Hoary Westmoreland
Hath challenged Edward in the field to prove
His calumny against his Child!

GONDIBERT.

Confusion!

EGBERT.

This day they enter on the solemn Trial.
The King himself will judge the dreadful combat,
And all the Court, in wondering sorrow sunk,
E'en now are hast'ning to attend the Issue.

GONDIBERT.

'Tis well, 'tis well, good Egbert! leave me, pray—
(*Passes from him.*)
Ah! 'tis too much! this is too fierce a blow,
How shall I steer me in so dread a tempest?
Confess my Wiles?—'twere Horror!—Leave me Egbert,
Why stand'st thou thus, with such exploring eye,
As if thou'dst read the workings of my brain!

EGBERT.

If right I read, your mind in balance holds
Th' opponent principles of Good and Ill.
Between these two, the Power that made us gave
Unbiass'd choice:—oh! let me then, whose tongue
Inspired your early Love of Right—

GONDIBERT.

Wilt thou
Preach Calmness to the furious Sea! And bid
The Whirlwind, fiercely hurling Forest Oaks,
Restrain its rage!—When they shall thee obey,
Then Gondibert shall be again a Child,
And take his Lessons from the virtuous Egbert.

EGBERT.

Oh, that those hours were not so sudden passed!
I can recall when Egbert, now despised,
Was dear to you; when, hanging round my neck,
You'd listen to—

GONDIBERT.

No more! I love thee still,
Still reverence thy Virtues. But, alas!
I feel them as the bounteous dew from Heaven,
That falls in vain on sterile ingrate soil
Which can no render yield for richest gifts.

EGBERT.

Thus men will talk, who'd rather shine in Words
Than firmly seek for Truth. But, oh! this once
Let me resume my wonted sway. This hour—

GONDIBERT.

Quick to thy chamber, Egbert, and make prayers;
Such holy men as thou art, have no call
In these rude times. The world is headstrong grown,
And needs a firmer curb than thine to guide it.

EGBERT.

Since only one way I can gain your ear,
Know young rash Lord! I'm privy to the plot,
Th' inhuman plot, by female cunning framed,
In which you have dishonestly concurred.
How I came there is tale for other times
But, I was hidden witness of the scheme
Was framed last night within Albina's garden!

GONDIBERT.

That thou wert there, thou prying, list'ning, fool
Is warrant for thy Death—(*Half drawing*)
Yet hold, escape; whilst I command my rage
Your outraged master fly!

EGBERT.

Oh, I fear not
Your anger, Lord; nay I could gladly die,
For, dying, on your mind I might impress
Just Horror for the—

GONDIBERT.

Schoolman! prating cease,
And know a Duty thou hast yet to learn—
To treat Superior's slidings with Respect.
Nor dare to comment on the Will of those
Who, seen by thee at such a dizzy height,
Should make thee doubtful of thy own discerning,
And keep presumptuous Judgment down.—Begone!
[*Exit* EGBERT, *watchfully*.
What chance untoward hath him witness made?
No matter! keener sorrows now surround.
—Oh, Westmoreland! and can I dare the pillow

Snatch from 'neath thy time-blanch'd head? and send
thee,
From Age's due repose, t' expose thy breast
To the relentless Spear?—No! perish first.
I'll go and to the King relate the crime
To which a furious Passion sunk a wretch,
Who saw the only treasure of his Soul
Torn from his grasp, to bless him most he hates!
(*Going*.)
—What! and thus mark, thus brand, myself a Villain?
This were a suicide that Honour claims not,
That Nature does abhor.—What then remains?—
Oh! guide me Heaven! or—incite me Hell!
I cant recede, yet—to go on is Horror!
—Ah! what a sea of crimes, one step from shore,
Bears me away! Thou whirling eddy Vice,
Touch but the outmost circle of thy ring,
Thy strong resistless Current draws us in;
Torn from the shore, despairing, we look back,
And, hurried on, are overwhelm'd and lost!

ACT

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I. THE LISTS.

On one side are ranged the KING *and Court, on the other a Multitude with Officers.* WESTMORELAND *and* EDWARD *appear, in Armour, attended by their* ESQUIRES, *each under a Banner, on which are emblazoned their Arms and Devices. Their Helmets and Lances borne.*

Trumpet sounds.

A Herald advances.

HERALD.

Hear, noble Guthbert, Earl of Westmoreland!
And noble Edward, you of Somerset!
The King commands that now ye do advance,
And, in the Presence, openly declare
The Cause for which this Combat ye have asked;
Risking, in private feuds, the precious blood
Which for your Country only should be spilt!

WESTMORELAND.

My Liege! *I* answer the demand. Lord Edward
Did yesterday, with humble suit, entreat
That in his favour I would move my Daughter;
Feigning true Passion, and unequall'd Love.

With warm regard I did accept the charge,
And, not without some difficulty, won her.
This Morn was fixed, by hymeneal Rites
To sanctify the passion they avowed.
This very morn, whilst I, with joy impatient
Prepared to hail him my adopted Son,
He came, with Slander charg'd, base Falsehoods breathing
To stain her Fame, and gloss gross forfeiture
Of Faith he'd pledged. For this, I challenge Edward!

THE KING.

This Charge, by Westmoreland's good Earl alledged,
We have, with Wonder and Concern, attended.
Midst the chaste Ladies who adorn our Court,
Not one more peerless stands than Countess Raimond;
Not one whose Fame more fitly suits her Birth,
Not one whose Honour more deserves her Fame.
Why then, Lord Edward, hast thou, causeless, stain'd it?
Why thrown away a gem that throned Monarchs
Might well behold thee gain with envious eye?

EDWARD.

Be witness for me Heaven!—Dread Sovereign, You!
And you bear witness too—assembled People!
That Raimond's Chastity I held unquestion'd
As the high myst'ries of our holy faith.
I loved her in most honorable love,
And, to have worn with her the marriage wreath
More glorious deemed it than Imperial Crowns.
I who would, yesterday, against a Legion,
Her honour have maintained, must now—Reverse!
Here, midst the Blushes of the day, stand forth
The forced Accuser of undone Albina!

THE KING.

Some wrong Interpretation seems to lurk,
And to have caused this mischievous dispute.

We do advise you, Lords, to take more time.
If, in short space, the knot doth not unfold,
We do consent that ye again shall meet,
And prove, at point of sword, whose is the Error.

WESTMORELAND.

This sword, my Liege! hath taught the Eastern World
Submission to your rule. Its faithful point
Hath reach'd the hearts of Infidels and Foes.
May its good service yet Dishonour blur
And may this arm hang nerveless to my side
If I depart the Lists ere I have proved it
On the defamer of my spotless Child!

THE KING.

In this nice point, we only with Advice
Would interpose, not fetter with Commands!
If this be your matured resolve, pursue it;
Though deeply we lament that two such Heroes
Should turn their Lances 'gainst each other's breast.
—To Combat sound!

(*Trumpet sounds, Herald advances.*)

HERALD.

Ye Knights! who gave or have accepted challenge,
Lords Westmoreland and Edward, your Career
Begin! not doubting but his arm shall vanquish
Who lifts it on the side of sacred Truth.
—God speed the Right!

WESTMORELAND.

Haste we to mount. Now Edward! those grey locks
That thou didst taunt shall prove a wreath victorious.

[*Seizing his Lance, and Retiring eagerly to mount.*

EDWARD.

Since thy fierce spirit will with blood alone
Be satisfied, Thee Westmoreland! I meet.

(*Takes his Lance.*)

But, righteous Heaven! restrain my erring arm,
That, whilst it guards the life thou bidst me keep,
It may not injure his who thirsts for mine!

(*Retiring.*)

EGBERT. (*rushing from the Croud.*)

Hold, hold! my Lords! stay—ere that ye commit
A deed that leads to Horror and Repentance!
I have a tale that will unfold—

GONDIBERT. (*springing forward.*)

Low Wretch
Thou liest! it choaks thee in the utterance!

THE KING.

Whence this irreverence? Disarm Lord Gondibert!
And know, bold Man, that, in the eye of Kings
All hold an equal place. I bear a Sceptre
That serves for each man's staff, and shall support
Alike the Lord and Peasant. Speak, old Man;
Whate'er thy tale, thou shalt have patient hearing.

EGBERT.

Most gracious Liege! to save the precious blood
Of these much injured Lords, with deepest grief
I witness bear, that in a snare they're thrall'd
Most wickedly devis'd for their destruction!

THE KING.

Whom dost accuse of this atrocious crime?

EGBERT.

There are, who have with groundless jealousy
Poison'd Lord Edward's mind, and him misled
To charge with Infamy his spotless Bride.

EDWARD.

Prove me but Sland'rer! prove me blest old man!

THE KING.

Thou say'st there *are*, but nam'st not whose the fault.

EGBERT.

Dread task!----In truth, the chief in fault is—

GONDIBERT.

Dastard

Speak out! nor dare insult me with thy Mercy!
'Twas I—I am the chief in fault—if fault.
I practiced on a love-mad fool's credulity,
Array'd an Angel in a garb of hell
And he the cheatery believed!

EDWARD.

Each word

Distracting torture fixes in my heart.

GONDIBERT.

'Twas me thou saw'st approach Albina's chamber!
The tales to which thou list'nedst of her falsehood
Were all Imposture.—Ask ye why 'twas planned?
Because I love her!

EDWARD.

Love her!

GONDIBERT.

Wherefore not?

Say wherefore, but for casual Name of Brother,
Should I not boast my Love? But for that cause,
Thy thought had dared not to ascend to her.

WESTMORELAND.

Most impious passion!

GONDIBERT.

Impious! Even now

I will maintain it! Instant will I arm (*to Edward.*)
And meet thee in the Lists. (*Going.*)

THE KING.

Stay, I command!

Thou hast no longer Title to the Rights
Allowed to those, who, in the path of Honour,
Have, persevering, shaped their spotless course.
Thy Crimes degrade thee 'neath our Yeomanry,
And we decree that whosoe'er accepts
From thee a Challenge, be unworthy held
To try his Lance in honour'd Chivalry!

GONDIBERT.

My Liege!

THE KING.

Nay, deem not this thy Punishment;
When men, of such exalted rank as thine,
Swerve into Crime and basest Treachery,
Justice, unbiass'd, on your heads shall pour
The vial of her wrath—that ye may stand
As lofty Beacons to the world beneath!
Hear then thy Doom!—We banish thee our Realm:
If, in twelve hours, thou shalt be found within
The precincts of our Court, or, in three days,
Within our Realm, the Penalty is Death—
Presume no Answer!—Hence!

[*Exit* GONDIBERT, EGBERT *following*.

Stay you, old Man!
Thou, to whose love of sacred Truth we owe
This happy Change, by Us art thou retain'd,
Thy King will answer for thy future Fortunes.

EGBERT.

Unworthy should I be, could I accept
Of Blessings sprung from my loved Lord's Destruction.
It is a tort'rous Duty I've fulfill'd!
To some remote abode I'll now retire,
And pass the little remnant of my days
In sorrow for his fault, and Prayer to Heaven
For his Repentance.

WESTMORELAND.

Thy retirement be
My care. At present, Egbert, at my Mansion
Attend my coming. [*Exit* EGBERT.

EDWARD.

Injured Westmoreland!
How—how shall I approach thee? Shame, Despair,
Both rend my breast! my eyes nor dare I lift
To thine, from fear I read my Sentence there!

THE KING.

Come, my good Lord! let Us for Edward plead!
For him, whose Virtues, Glory, and Descent,
Demand an advocate not less than royal.
If fair Albina now beheld him thus
With eyes in deep Contrition bent on Earth,
Pity would rob her Anger of its force,
She too would plead, and, with the skill of Love,
Extort a pardon for—her Country's Hero!

WESTMORELAND.

Though high in Spirit, proud, and quickly moved
By aught that glances on our spotless Honour—
I, gracious Sovereign! can as freely pardon.
These public Proofs of my Albina's virtue
Restore my bosom to its wonted Calm,
And thee, Lord Edward, to thy wonted place;—
Again I thus embrace thee as my Son.

EDWARD.

What great, unparallel'd, transporting goodness!

THE KING.

This then is still the Wedding-day!—the Rite
Be instantly performed. That no Regret
May poison such an hour, we do recall
The Order for your Service in the East,
Till We Ourselves shall in the Orient Sea,
Midst our red streamers gleaming round their shores,
Float our imperial Pendant, and with sword,
Blazing destruction like the Guardian Seraph's,
Drive from blest Sion's walls the Infidel.

EDWARD.

My Prince, my Guardian, and my much loved Master!
With rapture I the leave you grant accept,
And yield my Helmet to the care of Love.

WESTMORELAND *and* EDWARD, *uncovered, bow at the foot of the Throne, and the Scene closes.*

SCENE II.

SCENE II.

AN APARTMENT IN GONDIBERT'S PALACE.

Enter GONDIBERT, *followed by* ELFRIDA.

ELFRIDA.

'Tis thus that weak-ones, sinking in the ruin
Their active Folly framed, complain of Fate,
Blame all around. Thy Stars accuse not,
Nor Egbert; on thyself alone thou shouldst
Revenge thine injuries!

GONDIBERT.

Elfrida, spare!
My mind, by wild conflicting passions worn,
Now, like a Hart in respite from the hounds,
Would sink in Apathy.

ELFRIDA.

Hear then a tale
Will rouse thee from thy Lethargy!—this hour
Albina will be Edward's Wife!

GONDIBERT.

This hour!
Expiring Hopes, half smother'd in my breast,
This Haste insults! and Vengeance, rous'd thus, kills
Reviving Conscience!

(*Pause*)

Leave me now, Elfrida,
On dreadful deeds I'd ruminate alone.

ELFRIDA.

On what? Instruct me in thy thoughts; impart!

GONDIBERT.

No. Leave me!

ELFRIDA.

(*Aside*—Ah! I see his mind is full,
And marshals daring deeds. His louring Brow,

And that fix'd eye, bespeak some master-act—
Mischiefs awake! with ye alone my soul
Feels unison. All now is at the worst,
No Change can injure; therefore, now will I
T'eventful rage and frenzy urge him on!)
Conceive the joy of the victorious Edward!
Conceive his Triumph; Triumph over thee
Height'ning each sweet of his success.

GONDIBERT.

Your Mercy!
Dost riot in my woes? Are these meet deeds
Of Friendship?

ELFRIDA.

No! They're deeds of wild Despair!
Oh, wert thou then so Love-sick as to think
That Pity, pity to *thy* woes, could prompt me
To sink my soul in Crime!

GONDIBERT.

What lurks 'neath this!

ELFRIDA.

That I, on Restoration set, perceived
No road but through Lord Edward to my hopes,
That thee I, easily, have made my tool,
To mar their hated loves!

GONDIBERT.

As lightning quick,
Fly me fell monster! lest, from vengeance due
I should forget Sex renders thee exempt.
[*Exit* ELFRIDA, *with an air of Menace.*
(*Pause*)
Be firm, my soul! let not unworthy weakness
Destroy the vengeful purpose thou hast framed.
I'm banish'd, robb'd of Country and of Name!
Yet, there remains a Mind defies their vengeance,
Which, though these limbs were braced by chains of steel,
And darkness closed these means of light for ever,
Would rise superior to their bounded power,

And scorn alike their fetters and their laws.
He still, for whom I'm exiled, forth each vein
Shall heart-blood tribute pay to my Revenge! [*Exit.*

SCENE III. ALBINA'S GARDEN.

Enter ADELA.

My lonely Mistress, vainly, still I seek
Through every gloomy, solitary, walk,
Forced to give tidings will destroy her peace!
(*Enter* ELFRIDA.)
The Ceremonial's past—unhappy Lady!
Lord Edward and the Countess now are one.

ELFRIDA.

I hear thee, Adela, unmoved!—and whence?
Does the scourged wretch no added stripe perceive?
Grow we then callous to repeated woe!

ADELA.

With decent Pride, and with affected Ire,
The Countess long her Lover's prayers withstood.
At length, her Sire—to save her from the shame
Of yielding to her heart's most eager wish,
Commandment gave, her Hand to yield to Edward
Whilst he conducted to the Holy Rite.

ELFRIDA.

Would Death had been as busy there!

ADELA.

Whilst you
I sought, Lord Edward met me. Bear, said he,
These Lines: Elfrida's anguish they'll relieve.

ELFRIDA. (*reads.*)

"The injuries the Countess hath received can meet no Pardon! From Exposition you may yet be spared. Quit as your voluntary act Albina's Castle. The Ills his family entailed on your's Edward will study to relieve. A Stipend, suited to your Rank, shall be assigned—at distance from Albina."

So sunk (*Destroying the Letter.*)
that he prescribes my breathing place!
Edward point out the spot where I must eat
The morsel he assigns me? Sibald! Sibald!
Will it not reach thee even in thy tomb
That thy Elfrida must depend for bread
On his fell Son who brought thee to the block!

ADELA.

Be not thus moved, a moment's pause for thought!

ELFRIDA.

I have no Power to think—but of my Wrongs!

ADELA.

Albina bade me seek her Friend, and chide
An absence so unkind!

ELFRIDA.

Must I return,
Witness compelled of every hope atchieved?
With Resignation meet, whom I'd destroy!
Yes, such the boons Dependence thou bestow'st,
Such the Distinctions that denote thy Slaves!
[*Exeunt.*

Enter GONDIBERT.

Ye Bowers, ye Solitudes, your Shelter give,
A Murderer seeks your Shade - - - Rise, rise, ye Furies!—
A Murderer here—yet Nature unconvulsed!
In such an hour, no Star should shed a ray,
No Planet glisten through the louring sky,
But Spectres wild should dart athwart the gloom,
With hideous shriek arrest th' affrighted ear
And bar off Guilt—by Madness! Then—but hark!
How melting sounds of swelling music float
The Air!- - - Now, to the joyous then, to teach,
That Death's ill-manner'd- - - Demon Tempter, hold!
A moment's Pause ere done this deed of Horror!
Murder! am I then turned a cool Assassin!

—Religion!—Nature—oh, thou common Mother!—
Ah!—tis too late—Repentance comes too late—
My hands seem now already dyed in Blood
And horror quickens to its utmost height.—
As fall'n he gasps, and writhes in agony,
His groan—Death in that sound will seize my Brain.
If not!- - - How life support when Edward's dead?
Would then no Rival come? and one at length
Be blest!- - -Ah! happier thought!—I'll die myself,
And with me bear Albina to the Grave!

[*Hurries off wildly.*

SCENE IV.

AN APARTMENT IN WESTMORELAND'S HOUSE.

Enter ALBINA, INA, *and a female* ATTENDANT *with Lights.*

ALBINA.

Leave me then now to serious thought awhile,
My due devotions are not yet performed.
Request Elfrida here to wait my coming,
Some heighten'd Anguish, Ina, preys on her
I would assuage!

[*Exeunt* INA *and* ATTENDANT, *leaving the Candles in the most distant part of the Room.*

And now, whilst giddy Mirth
Shakes the high Dome, and festive Merriment
Expands each Heart, will I awhile retire,
And Providence with grateful thanks address
Who me hath guarded through surrounding ills!

[*Exit, taking one of the Candles. No Light on the Stage, but from the one that remains.*

(*A Pause.* GONDIBERT *enters.*)

GONDIBERT.

Mad riot spreads her empire through the house,

Whilst, unperceived, Death near his destined Bride,
Hath work'd his way!—And thou his Messenger
(*Looking on his Dagger.*)
Rather than touch her living Alabaster
Wilt thou not shrink!- - - Then aid me Furies!
Wake your infernal fires within my breast,
Drain from my veins each drop of human blood,
Lest it return, unbidden, to my Heart
To check me in the moment I would act!
Albina, now,—to Edward?—or to Death?
To Death! In death—to me!—'Tis Fate—I seek her!
[*Exit.*

Enter ELFRIDA.

Is not the triumph of Albina sure
'Till I am summoned her Success to hail!
Still with obtrusive goodness doth she haunt me,
Me who ne'er sought, but hate, compassion. Pity!
Man calls thee gentle: Yes, perchance, 'tis true
That thou may'st balm the wounded mind that's meek,
Thou dost but heighten Fever in the Proud!
—How gay, how full of bliss, are all around me!
But ah! my breast is an abyss of wretchedness
Which ne'er with beam of joy will be illumed,
And this, O Raimond! do I owe to thee!
Would that my Wishes had the force of Spells- - -
She comes! and, raging in my frame, confines
The Maledictions I would pour on her—
Ah! Edward 'tis!
[*Going, enter Edward on the opposite side.*

EDWARD.

Thou wilt not fly me now!
Turn my Heart's treasure!—to thy Husband turn!

ELFRIDA.

Torture!—Addressed as her who marr'd my Fate—
Would instant Death could seize her!

EDWARD.

My Albina!
Why dost thou cruelly avert the eyes
Whose glance is transport to thy Edward's heart—

GONDIBERT. (*Rushing in.*)

Ere yet a glance from her thou canst obtain
First my leave ask!
(*Stabs* ELFRIDA; *who shrieks, and expires.*)
'Tis I who will thy Fate!
I, whom thou'st scorn'd, in Love, in Glory, vanquish'd,
I, now am Conqueror! See, at my beck, flown
Thy vaunted bliss! Where, Braggart, is the joy
That, yesterday, did madden in thy look?

EDWARD.

(*Seems motionless with Horror; then drawing his Dagger, rushes on Gondibert.*)
This for Albina!

GONDIBERT.

(*Arresting Edward's arm, whose breast is exposed to his Dagger.*)
Fool! the blow of death
Is mine!—This for Albina—this!
(*Stabs himself, and falls.*)
Thus, Edward,
She's my Bride now!

EDWARD.

Relentless Fiend! whose Vice,
Unshackled, hath- - - I'll linger not t' upbraid!
Albina!—death-seized Bride! my murder'd Wife!
Together we the dreary Tomb will reach—
Thy Spirit stay!—I follow thee e'en now—

[*As Edward lifts his arm to stab himself, Albina enters on the opposite side.*

ALBINA.

What mean these deathful sounds? Ah, sight of Horror!

Support me Edward!

EDWARD.

Ah! she lives—she lives!
[*Throws away the Dagger, and clasps her in his arms.*

GONDIBERT. (*faintly.*)

Albina living!—whom then have I slain?
Oh Heaven!—thy hand was here!

WESTMORELAND. (*without.*)

Be quick with Light—
(*Enters followed by Guests, and Servants with numerous Lights.*)
Ah! Death unsparing of my mansion now!

GONDIBERT.

A moment still is granted to unfold.—
The Madness of despairing Love impelled
To kill Albina!—But—a fitter victim—
My Life doth flow too fast—Forgive!—Forgive!
My guilty Passion even now expires
It rushes forth my heart in crimson streams - - - -
The Crimes it led me to are conscience-fix'd!
Ah! now—'tis now, Remorse! thy torturous fang,
Unsparing, probes my conscience-wounded breast—
Forgive!- - -
(*draws himself towards Albina.*)
I'm summon'd- - -now- - - (*Expires.*)

ALBINA.

'Tis will'd by Heaven,
That suffers Death to catch thy breath so quick,
No cheering Pardon greet thy Mortal Ear!
Thy Spirit I forgive!—may mercy meet it,
As I adore his hand who me preserved.

EDWARD.

Come, let no Sigh, or tone of Woe, profane
The hallowed day on which Heaven saved Albina!

WESTMORELAND.

Yet, grieve a moment Crime's progressive sway!

Within the bosom of this noble youth
Bright Virtues sprang as from their native source.
His years, through lengthened Time, had sweetly flowed
Down to the faintest beams of life's last Sun,
But Vice, alluring in the form of Love,
Through guilty want of early scrutiny
Unwatch'd Foundations laid, on which, at length,
Imperious Passion stept upon her Throne!
Then! though the snaring barb within was seen!
The bait of pleasure, madden'd thus, was seized.

ALBINA.

May gentle Candour sink in Shade the crimes
Of him whose life once brightest Virtues deck'd!

WESTMORELAND.

Through Passions unrestrained, and fail to watch
The earliest Swerve from Right, against him now
His blighted Virtues stand in dread account!
Whilst we, with lowly Gratitude, discern
That Heaven ordain'd that, midst the schemes of Vice,
Ill should reach none, but those who planned the wrong!



THE BELLE'S STRATAGEM.

A COMEDY.

This Comedy was brought out at Covent Garden in the year 1780; it has been constantly on the stage since, and was performed before the Royal Family once every season as long as they frequented the Theatres.

A Critic, in language somewhat florid, has said of Letitia Hardy that were Venus and Minerva to make a descent to the Earth, their united powers would be requisite to a perfect exhibition of the character. Her adventures are certainly the most brilliant, though rather fanciful. Davies, who gives some pages of praise to this Comedy, in his Life of Garrick, pronounces that Letitia's adventures could have occurred only to the Imagination of a Lady.

Perhaps the adventures of Sir George and Lady Frances are the most touching. His jealousy is not the common jealousy of the Stage—that of distrust, but that of precaution, in a Husband who is still a Lover, devoting himself to his new found Happiness, and withdrawing in tremor from the mixed circle of Fashion. The Moral of the play is enforced, with great life and spirit, in the defeat of the scouted and exiled libertine Courtall.

Some Speeches of deeper Thought stand prominent, amidst the general current of vivacious language; for instance—the half ironical excuse for employing foreign servants, and the justification of foreign Tours, in the third scene of the first act; the descriptions of a Woman of Fashion in the first scene of the second act; and Letitia's description of a woman devoted to her husband, towards the close of the Masquerade scene in the fourth act. The original Letitia (Miss Younge afterwards Mrs. Pope) it is said was always too much agitated to be able to suppress a real tear, when, in terror for the result, she took off her Mask and discovered herself to Doricourt at the end of the Play.

DEDICATION,

BY PERMISSION.

TO

THE QUEEN.

MADAM,

In the following Comedy, my purpose was to draw A FEMALE CHARACTER that, with the most lively Sensibility, fine Understanding, and elegant Accomplishments, should in her natural character unite that graceful Reserve and Delicacy, which, veiling those charms, render them still more interesting. In delineating such a Character my Heart naturally dedicated it to YOUR MAJESTY, and formed a wish for Permission to lay it at your feet. Your Majesty's graciously allowing me this high Honour is the point to which my hopes aspired, and a Reward, of which I may indeed be proud.

MADAM,

With the warmest wishes for the continuance
of your Majesty's Felicity,
I am
YOUR MAJESTY'S
Most devoted
and most dutiful Servant,
HANNAH COWLEY.

CHARACTERS.

MEN.

DORICOURT.
HARDY.
SIR GEORGE TOUCHWOOD.
FLUTTER.
SAVILLE.
COURTALL.
SILVERTONGUE.
FIRST GENTLEMAN.
SECOND GENTLEMAN.
MOUNTEBANK.
FRENCH VALET.
DICK.
GIBSON.

WOMEN.

LETITIA HARDY.
MRS. RACKETT.
LADY FRANCES TOUCHWOOD.
MISS OGLE.
KITTY WILLIS.

THE BELLE'S STRATAGEM.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I. LINCOLN'S INN.

Enter SAVILLE, *at a distance, looking round as if at a loss, followed by a* SERVANT.

Sav. LINCOLN'S-Inn, well. But where to find him, now I am in Lincoln's-Inn? Where did he say his Master was?

Serv. He only said in Lincoln's-Inn, Sir.

Sav. And your Wisdom never enquired at whose Chambers?

Serv. Sir, you spoke to the Servant yourself!

Sav. If I was too impatient to ask questions, you ought to have taken directions Blockhead!—

Enter COURTALL.

Ha! Courtall!—Bid him keep the horses in motion, and do you enquire at all the Chambers round—(*Exit Servant.*) What adventure brings you to this part of the Town?—Have any of the long Robes handsome Sisters or Daughters?

Court. Perhaps they have—but, I came on a different errand; and had thy good fortune brought thee here sooner I'd have given thee such a treat!

Sav. I am sorry I missed it—what was it?

Court. I was informed that my Cousins Fallow were come to Town, and desired earnestly to see me at their Lodgings in Warwick Court Holborn. Away drove I, painting them all the way as so many HEBES. They came from the furthest part of Northumberland, had never been in Town, and of course were, as I concluded, made up of Rusticity and Beauty.

Sav. Well!

Court. After waiting thirty minutes, during which there was a violent bustle above, in burst five sallow damsels; four of them Maypoles. Nature, to introduce her various lines, midst so many strait ones made the fifth a Curve, in the Æsop stile. Like hounds on a fresh scent, they all opened—at once: "Oh, Cousin Courtall!—How do you do Cousin "Courtall! (*in different voices*) Lord Cousin, I'm "glad you're come! We want you to go with us to "the Park, and the Plays, and the Opera, and all "the fine places!" You may send for your Country Suitors, thought I, my dears to attend you, for I am sure I wont.—However, I heroically staid an hour with them, and discovered that the Misses were all come to Town with the hopes of leaving it—Wives; —their heads full of Amiable Baronets, and Fops, and Adventures.

Sav. But, how could you get off?

Court. Oh, pleaded Engagements.—However Conscience twitched—so I breakfasted with them this morning, and 'squired them to the Gardens here, as the most private place in Town; then, took a *sorrowful* leave, complaining of my hard, hard, fortune, that obliged me—ha! ha! ha! to set off immediately for Dorsetshire.

Sav. I congratulate you on your Escape.—Courtall at the Opera with five awkward Country Cousins, ha! ha! ha! Why, your existence as a man of Fashion could not have survived it.

Court. The Plagues! had they come to Town, like

the Rustics of the last age, to see St. Paul's, the Lions, and the Waxwork, at their Service; but, the Cousins of our day come up Ladies—and, with the knowledge they glean from Pocket-books and Magazines—*Fine* Ladies; laugh at the Bashfulness of their grandmothers, and boldly demand their *entrées* into the first Circles.

Sav. (*Looks round.*) Where can this fellow be! Come, give me some News—I have been at war with woodcocks and partridges, and am a stranger to all that has passed out of their region.

Court. News! More than in three Gazettes. The Mamas, with female families, are going to petition for a Bill—to compel Bachelors to marry!

Sav. They'll succeed! For, the majority of our Lawgivers—being themselves caught—will enforce a Maxim of Legislation—that every man shall be equally burthened!

Court. Ha! ha! But prithee Saville, how came you in Town whilst the country is over-run with Hares and Foxes?

Sav. I came to meet my friend Doricourt, who, you know, is lately arrived from Rome.

Court. Arrived! Aye, and has driven us all out! His Carriages, his Liveries, his Dress, Himself, are the Rage of the day! His first appearance set the whole town in a Ferment, and his *Valet* is besieged by *Levées* of Taylors and other ministers of Fashion to gratify the Impatience of their customers for becoming *à la Doricourt.* Nay, the beautiful Lady Frolic 'tother night, with two Sister Countesses, insisted upon his waistcoat for muffs; and their snowy arms now bear it in triumph about Town, to the heart-rending affliction of all our *Beaux Garçons.*

Sav. Indeed! Well, those little gallantries will soon be over; he's on the point of Marriage.

Court. Marriage! Doricourt on the point of Marriage!—the happiest tidings you could have

given, next to his being hanged. Who is the Bride elect?

Sav. Miss Hardy, the rich Heiress. She is come to Town *à propos* with her father, who is arrived to attend his duty in Parliament. The match was made by the Parents, and the Courtship began on the nurse's knees; Master used to crow at Miss, and Miss used to chuckle at Master.

Court. Then, by this time, they care no more for each other—than I do for my country cousins.

Sav. I dont know that; they have never met since —thus high; and so, at least have no disregard for each other.

Court. Never met! odd!

Sav. A Whim of Mr. Hardy's; he thought his daughter's charms, in making a sudden, would make a more forcible impression, if her Lover remained in ignorance of them till he had made the Grand Tour. His gift of Foreknowledge, on which you know how incessantly he piques himself, told him all this.

Enter SAVILLE'S *Servant.*

Serv. Mr. Doricourt Sir has been at Counsellor Pledell's—and has been gone about five minutes.

Sav. Five minutes! 'Tis precisely the time I have been too late all my life!—Good morrow, Courtall, I must pursue him. (*going*)

Court. Promise to dine with me to day; I have some honest fellows. (*Going off, on the opposite side.*)

Sav. Cant promise; perhaps I may.—See there—there's a bevy of female Patagonians coming down upon us!

Court. By the memory of Brodignag they must be my strapping Cousins!—I dare not look behind me—Run, man, run! [*Exeunt, same side.*

SCENE II.

A HALL AT DORICOURT'S.

Enter the french VALET, *and other foreign Servants, and some Tradesmen.*

Tradesm. Well then, you have overhauled to us all his Honour's Wardrobe.

Valet. All, *en verité*, *Messieurs!* you *avez* seen every ting. *Serviteur, serviteur*—[*Exeunt Tradesmen.*] Ah! here comes vun *autre* curious Englishman, and dat's vun *autre* guinee *pour moi*—

Enter SAVILLE.

Allons, *Monsieur*, dis way; I vill shew you tings, such tings you never see in England!—Velvets by *Le Mosse*, Suits cut by *Verdue*, trimmings by *Grossette*, embroidery by *Detanville*—

Sav. Puppy! where is your Master?

Enter PORTER.

Port. You chattering, frog-eating, dunderhead dress-monger—learn to know when you see a Gentleman. 'Tis Mr. Saville.

Valet. Monsieur Saville! *Je suis mort de peur!*—Ten Tousand pardones! *Excusez mon erreur*, and permit me to conduct you to *Monsieur* Doricourt; he be too happy *à vous voir.* [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

SCENE III.

AN APARTMENT AT DORICOURT'S.

Enter DORICOURT.

Doric. (*Speaking to a Servant behind.*) I shall be too late for St. James's; bid him come immediately.

Enter VALET *and* SAVILLE.

Valet. Monsieur Saville. [*Exit.*

Dor. Most fortunate! My dear Saville, let the warmth of my salutation speak the pleasure of my heart.

Sav. This is some Comfort, after the scurvy reception I met with in your Hall.—I prepared my mind, as I came up stairs, for a—*bon jour*—a grimace—and an Adieu!

Dor. Why so?

Sav. Judging of the Master from the rest of the family.—Wherefore that flock of Foreigners below, with their parchment faces and snuffy whiskers? What! cant an Englishman stand behind your carriage, or put on your Coat!

Dor. Stale, my dear Saville, stale! Englishmen make the best Artizans, Soldiers, and Philosophers in the world—but, the very worst Footmen. I keep French fellows and Germans, as the Romans kept slaves, because their own countrymen had minds too enlarged and haughty to descend, with a Grace, to the duties of such a station.

Sav. A good excuse for a bad practice.

Dor. On my honor, Experience would convince you of its Truth. A Frenchman neither hears, sees, or breathes—but as his Master directs; and his whole system of conduct is comprised in one short word—OBEDIENCE! An Englishman (*looking grave*) rea-

sons, forms opinions, cogitates, and disputes; the one, is the mere creature of your Will; the other, a being believing himself of equal importance in the universal scale with yourself; and is therefore your Judge whilst he wears your *Livery*, and decides on your actions with the freedom of a Censor.

Sav. And all this in defence of a custom I have heard you execrate—together with all the adventitious manners imported by our travelled gentry!

Dor. Aye, but that was at Eighteen; we are always *very* wise at eighteen!—But, for the sake of higher objects than Servants, quarrel not with Travel.—We go into Italy, where the sole business of the people is to improve the powers of Music, we yield to the fascination, and grow Enthusiasts in the charming science. We travel over France, and see the whole kingdom composing Ornaments and inventing Fashions, we condescend to avail ourselves of their industry, and to adopt their modes. To England we return, and find the Nation intent on the most important objects; Polity, Commerce, War, with all the Liberal Arts, employ her sons. The latent sparks glow afresh within our bosoms, with faculties enlarged, we have learnt, by Contrast, the value of our home, the amusing follies of the Continent imperceptibly slide away, and Senators, Statesmen, Patriots, and Heroes, emerge from the *virtû* of Italy, and the frippery of France.

Sav. I may as well give it up! You had always the art of placing your faults in the most favorable light; but I cant help liking you, faults and all, so, to start a subject which must please you—when do you expect Miss Hardy?

Dor. The Zest of expectation is past. She is arrived, and I this morning had the Honour of an interview at Pledell's. The writings were ready, and, in obedience to Mr. Hardy, we met to sign and seal.

Sav. Was your heart elate, or sunk, when you beheld your Mistress?

Dor. Neither one or the other! she's a fine girl, as far as mere Person goes——But—

Sav. But what?

Dor. Why, she's *only* a fine girl—Complexion, Shape, and Features,—nothing more!

Sav. Are not they enough?

Dor. No! She should have Spirit! Fire! *l'air enjoué!* that Naiveté—something, nothing, which every body sensates, and which nobody can describe, in the resistless charmers of Italy and France.

Sav. Thanks! to the parsimony of my father which kept me from Travel! I would not have been without my admiration of true unaffected English beauty —to have been quarrelled for by all the Belles of Versailles and Florence!

Dor. Pho! thou hast no Taste—English beauty! 'tis Insipidity;—it wants Zest, it wants Poignancy. Frank! I have known a Frenchwoman, indebted to Nature for no present but a pair of decent Eyes, reckon in her suite as many *Comtes*, *Marquisses*, and *Petits Maîtres*, as would satisfy the Vanity of three dozen of our first-rate Toasts. I have known an Italian *Marquisina* make ten conquests in stepping from her Carriage, and carry her slaves from one city to another, whose real intrinsic Beauty would have yielded to half the little *Grisettes* that pace your Park on a Sunday.

Sav. And, has Miss Hardy nothing of this?

Dor. If she has, she was pleased to keep it to herself. I was in the room half an hour before I could catch the colour of her eyes, and every attempt to draw her into Conversation occasioned so cruel an embarrassment, that I was reduced to conversation with her Father, on News, French fleets, and Spanish Captures. However, I have engaged myself.

Sav. So Miss Hardy with *only* Beauty, Modesty,

and Merit, is doomed to a husband who will despise her.

Dor. You are unjust. Though she has not inspired me with violent Passion—my Honor secures her Felicity!

Sav. Come, come, Doricourt, you know very well that when the Honor of a husband is locum-tenens for his Heart, his wife must be as indifferent as himself, if she is not unhappy.

Dor. Pho! never moralize without Spectacles. But, as we are on the tender subject, how did you bear Touchwood's carrying Lady Frances?

Sav. You know I looked up to her only with humble hope, and Sir George is every way worthy of her. Disappointed in a sweet *partial* tie—why, I thus have the more leisure to run about and make myself useful—to the World at large.

Dor. *A la Mode anglaise*, a Philosopher—even in Love!

Sav. I am going to call in at Hardy's. I detain you; you seem dressed at all points—and of course have an engagement.

Dor. To St. James's. I shall be at the Masquerade in the Evening; but, breakfast with me to-morrow, and we'll talk of our old companions—for, I pledge myself to you, Saville, the air of the Continent has not effaced one youthful prejudice or attachment.

Sav.——Except, as to Ladies and Servants!

Doric. True; there I plead guilty;—but, I have never yet found any Man whom I could cordially take to my heart, and call Friend, who was not born beneath a British Sky, and whose Heart and Manners were not truly English. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

SCENE IV.

AN APARTMENT AT MR. HARDY'S.

FLUTTER, *seated on a Sopha, tossing over some Books.*

Flut. What have we here?—"The Authentic HISTORY of Lapland"—Oh, that may be dipped into, for the mind quarrels not with *Romance* in Lapland —H-r-r-r (*reads.*)

Enter SAVILLE.

Sav. Ah! Flutter at Study! What a dearth must there be of News and Scandal! Have you seen Mrs. Rackett? Miss Hardy, I find, is not at home.

Flut. I have not seen the Widow yet. I have been near the North Pole whilst she has been at her Toilette. (*Flinging away the book, and yawning.*)

Sav. Have any events occurred in the World, since yesterday?

Flut. Oh, yes; I stopped at the Sale of Hunters as I came, and found Lord James Jessamy, Sir William Wilding, and Mr. What's his name?—When the first Hunter was brought out - - - But, now I think of it, you shant know a syllable of the matter; for I have been informed that you never believe more than half of what I say!

Sav. My dear fellow, somebody has been egregiously incorrect!—Half?—Why I never believe one tenth—that is according to the plain and literal Expression; but, as I understand you, your intelligence is amusing.

Flut. Why all this is very hard now! I never related a falsity in my life, unless I stumbled upon it by mistake, and, if it were otherwise, you dull matter-of-fact people are infinitely obliged to those warm

Imaginations which, to amuse, soar into Fiction. The actual Events of this little dirty world are not worth talking about, unless you embellish them! —ah! here comes Mrs. Rackett—Adieu to Weeds I see—all Life!—

Enter MRS. RACKETT.

Enter, Madam, in all your Charms! Saville has been impatient with your Toilette for keeping you so long; but, I think we are much obliged to it—and so are you!

Mrs. R. How so pray?—Good morning to you both—here, here's a hand a-piece for you.

(*They kiss her hands.*)

Flut. How so!—Because to your Toilette you owe so many Beauties!

Mrs. R. Delightful Compliment!—What do you think of that, Saville?

Sav. That he and his Compliments are alike—showy but wont bear examining. So you brought Miss Hardy to Town last night?

Mrs. R. Yes, I should have brought her before, but I had a fall from my horse that confined me a week. I suppose, in her heart, she a dozen times an hour half wished it had been fatal to me.

Flut. Why?

Mrs. R. Had she not an expecting Lover in Town all the time? She is gone to meet him this morning at the Lawyer's. I hope she'll charm—she's the sweetest girl in the world.

Sav. Like murder—Vanity will out; you have convinced me you think yourself more charming.

Mrs. R. How!

Sav. Oh, you know, no woman praises another, unless, in the very perfection she allows, she thinks herself superior.

Flut. And, unless he is conscious he deserves their hatred, no man ever rails at the Sex.

Mrs. R. Thank ye, Flutter, I owe ye a *Bouquet* for that. I am going to visit the new married Lady Frances Touchwood.—Who knows her Husband?

Flut. Every body.

Mrs. R. Is there not something odd in his character?

Sav. Why—Yes! he is passionately fond of his Wife.—But, so petulant is his love, that he opened the Cage of a favorite Bullfinch and sent it to catch Butterflies, because she rewarded its song with a kiss!

Mrs. R. Intolerable Monster! He deserves—

Sav. Nay nay, nay nay, this is your Sex now. Give a woman but one *trait* of Character, off she goes, sees the whole Being, marks him for an Angel or a Devil, and so exhibits him to all her acquaintance. This Monster! is one of the worthiest fellows upon earth; has sound sense in a liberal mind; but doats on his wife to such excess, that he quarrels with every thing she admires, and is jealous of her Tippet and Nosegay.

Mrs. R. Oh, less Love for me, kind Cupid! I can see no reason for preferring the torment of such an Affection to Tyranny.

Flut. Oh, pardon me, inconceivable difference, I see an inconceivable difference as clear as your bracelet. The Tyrant says—"Heyday Madam, do you suppose that MY table, and MY house, and MY pictures!"—Apropos—Pictures! (*speaks very fast*) There was the divinest Plague of Athens sold yesterday in Pall Mall—the dead figures so natural you would have sworn they were alive. Lord Carmine bid five hundred—a Thousand said Ingot the Nabob—down went the hammer! A *rouleau* for your bargain said Sir Jeremy Jingle—and what answer do you think Ingot made him?

Mrs. R. Why, took the offer.

Flut. Sir!—my children have got Whittington and

his Cat in the Nursery—just this Size; and they'll make a good match!

Mrs. R. Ha! ha! ha! That's just the course now;—the Nabobs and their Wives outbid at every sale, yet, the Strangers have no more Taste—

Sav. There, off you go again on Character! You forget that this story is told by Flutter, who always remembers every thing but the Persons and the Circumstances:—'twas Ingot the Nabob who offered a *Rouleau* for the bargain, and Sir Jeremy who made the Reply.

Flut. Eh!—I believe you are right—but the story's as good one way as 'tother. Good morning; in my way back I shall make my bow at Sir George Touchwood's. (*Going.*)

Sav. I'll venture every figure in your taylor's bill, you make some Blunder in your first three words there.

Flut. (*turning back*) Done!—My Taylor's bill has not been paid these three years; and I'll open my mouth with as much Care as Mrs. Bridget, who wears a cork plumper in each cheek, and never hazards more than two words, for fear of display! [*Exit.*

Mrs. R. 'Tis a good-natured insignificant creature! let in every where, and cared for no where—Ah! Miss Hardy returned from the Lawyer's—she seems rather flurried.

Sav. Then I leave you to your communications—

Enter LETITIA, *followed by her* MAID.

Adieu! I am rejoiced to see you so well Miss Hardy—I must tear myself away.

Let. Dont vanish in a Moment.

Sav. Oh, I beg quarter! you are the two most dangerous women in Town.—Staying to be shot at by four such eyes, is equal to a *Rencontre* with Paul

R 2

Jones.—(Aside.—They'll swallow the Nonsense, for the sake of the Compliment!) [*Exit.*

Let. (*Gives her cloak to her Maid.*) Order *Du Quesne* never to come again, positively he shall dress my hair no more. (*Exit Maid*) And this odious Dress, how unbecoming it is! I was bewitched to chuse it! (*throwing herself on a Sopha, and viewing herself in a Pocket Glass, Mrs. Rackett staring at her*) Did you ever see such a Fright as I am to day!

Mrs. R. Why I have seen you look----rather worse.

Let. How can you be so provoking? If I do not look this morning worse than ever I looked in my life, I am naturally a Fright. You shall have it which way you will.

Mrs. R. Just as you please; but, pray what is the meaning of all this?

Let. (*rising*) Men are all Dissemblers! Flatterers! Deceivers! Have I not heard a thousand times of my Air, my Eyes, my Shape—all made for Victory! and to day, when I bent my whole Heart on one conquest, I have proved that those imputed charms are nothing, for—Doricourt saw them unmoved!—A husband of fifteen months could not have examined me with more cutting indifference.

Mrs. R. Why then return it, like a Wife of fifteen months; and be as indifferent as he.

Let. Ah! there's the sting! The blooming boy who left his Image in my young heart, is at four and twenty improved in every Grace that fixed him there. It is the same face that my memory, or my fancy, constantly painted—its Expression more heightened, its Graces more finished. How mortifying, to feel myself at the same moment his slave, and an object of thorough indifference.

Mrs. R. How are you certain that is the case? Did you expect him to kneel down to make Oath of your Beauty, before your father, the Lawyer, and his Clerk!

Let. No; but, he should have looked as if a sudden Ray had pierced him! He should have been breathless speechless—for, oh! Caroline all this was I.

Mrs. R. I am sorry you was such a Fool. Can you expect a man who has seen half the fine women in Europe, to feel like a young Master who has just left boarding school? He is the most interesting fellow you have seen, and bewilders your imagination; but, he has seen a thousand pretty Women child before he saw you, and his romantic fancies have been over long ago.

Let. Your Raillery distresses me.—I am determined to touch his HEART! or never to be his wife.

Mrs. R. If you have no reason to believe his heart pre-engaged, be satisfied; if he is a man of Honour, you'll have nothing to complain of in his conduct.

Let. Nothing to complain of! Shall I marry the man I adore, with such an expectation as that?

Mrs. R. And, when you have fretted yourself pale, my dear, you will have mightily heightened your chance of Success!

Let. (*pausing*)—Yet, I have one Hope!—If there is any Power whose peculiar care is faithful love, that power I invoke to aid me!

Enter Mr. HARDY.

Hardy. Well now, wasn't I right? Eh, Letty? Eh, Cousin Rackett? wasn't I right? I knew 'twould be so. He was all agog to see her before he went abroad; and, if he had, I foresaw he'd have thought no more of her face, may be, than his own.

Mrs. R. May be, not half so much!

Hardy. Aye, may be so: but, I see things before hand. I foresaw exactly then, that to day ha! ha! he would fall desperately in Love with the wench.

Let. Indeed Sir!—how did you perceive it?

Hardy. That's a pretty Question! How do I perceive every thing? How did I forewarn Parson Homily that, if he did not contrive to have more Votes than Merit, he would lose the Lectureship? Did not the House receive, with Acclamations of Chearfulness, my foreseeing that, if war arose, the funds would fall!—and the Change of Ministry, and the rise of Taxes! How did I—but what Whim makes you so dull Letitia? I thought to have found you popping about as brisk as the jacks of your harpsichord.

Let. Surely, Sir, 'tis a very serious occasion!

Hardy. Poh! Poh! girls should never be grave before Marriage. How was you, Cousin, before-hand —eh?

Mrs. R. Why exceedingly full of Care. I could not sleep for thinking of my Coach and my Liveries. The Taste of the Clothes I should be presented in distracted me for a week; and, whether I should be married in White or Lilac, gave me the utmost Anxiety.

Let. And, is it possible that you had no other care?

Hardy. And pray, what may your cares be Mrs. Letitia? I foresee now it will turn out that you have taken a Dislike to Doricourt!

Let. Indeed, Sir—I have not.

Hardy. Then what's all this Melancholy about? Are not you going to be married? and, what's more, to a handsome sensible man? What's all this melancholy for I say?

Mrs. R. Why, only because she is over head and ears in love with him; which, it seems, your foreknowledge had not told you a word of.

Let. Fie, Caroline!

Hardy. Well, come, tell me what's the matter then? If you dont like him, hang signing and sealing, he shant have you—and yet I cant say that either; for, you know, that Estate that cost his father and

me upwards of four score thousand pounds, must go all to him if you wont have him: if he wont have you, indeed, 'twill be all your's. All that's clearly engrossed on parchment—nay—I dont know what to say about its being *clear*—however they tell me, there it is; and the poor dear man set his hand to it whilst he was a dying—" So, said I, I foresee you'll never live to see them married!"—But come, what is the matter? Do you really not like him?

Let. I fear, Sir—if I must speak—I fear——I was less agreeable in Mr. Doricourt's eyes than he appeared in mine.

Hardy. There you are mistaken; for I asked him —and he told me he liked you very well. Dont you think he must have taken a Fancy to my Letitia?

Mrs. R. Why really I think so, as——*I* was not present!

Let. My dear Sir—I am convinced he has not. But, if there is Spirit or Invention in Woman—he shall!

Hardy. Right, Girl!—so away to your Toilette.

Let. Oh! it is not my Toilette that can serve me; but a Plan has struck me, which, if you will not oppose it, flatters me with hopes of brilliant success.

Hardy. Oppose! not I indeed! I'm not fond of Opposition—so what is it?

Let. Why Sir—it may, at first, seem a little paradoxical;—but, as he does not like me enough, I want him to like me still less—and will, at our next interview, endeavour to heighten his *Indifference* into Dislike!

Hardy. What Conjurer could have foreseen that!

Mrs. R. Is this Love-witchery! Letitia—are you serious?

Let. As serious, as the most important event of my life demands!

Mrs. R. Why endeavour to make him dislike you?

Let. Because, 'tis much easier to convert a senti-

ment into its Opposite, than to transform indifference into tender passion.

Mrs. R. Let me see;—a Quality may be changed, but NOTHING cannot be turned into SOMETHING.—Well, that may be good Philosophy; but, I am afraid you'll find it like other Philosophy—a bad practical Speculation.

Let. I have the strongest Confidence in it. I am inspired with unusual Spirits! and on this Hazard willingly stake my Chance for Happiness—I am impatient to begin! [*Exit.*

Hardy. Can you foresee the End, Cousin?

Mrs. R. No Sir, nothing less than your penetration can; and I cant stay now to consider it. I am going to call on Miss Ogle, and then on Lady Frances Touchwood, and then to an Auction, and then—I dont know where;—but, I shall be at home time enough to witness their next extraordinary Interview—Good-bye! [*Exit.*

Hardy. Well—'tis odd;—I cant understand it—but, I foresee Letty will have her way, and so I shant give myself the useless trouble of disputing it. [*Exit.*

ACT THE SECOND.

Scene I. SIR GEORGE TOUCHWOOD'S.

Enter Doricourt, *and* Sir George.

Dor. Married! ha! ha! ha! you, whom I heard in Paris say such things of the Sex, are in London—a married man!

Sir Geo. The Sex is still what it has ever been, since *La petite Morale* banished substantial Virtues; and, rather than have given my Name to one of your thorough-bred Fashionable Dames, I'd have ventured across the globe in a fire-ship—and married a Japanese.

Dor. Yet, you have married an english Beauty; yea—and a Beauty born in High Life.

Sir Geo. True; but, she has the Simplicity of heart and manners that would have become the fair Hebrew damsels toasted by the Patriarchs.

Dor. Ha! ha!—Why thou art a downright matrimonial Quixote! My life on it, she becomes as mere a town Lady in six months as though she had been bred to the mystery.

Sir Geo. Common—common! No, Sir; Lady Frances, from the Ideas I have given her, despises High Life so much, that she'll live in it like a salamander in fire.

Dor. Oh, that the Circle *dans la place Victoire* could witness thy extravagance! I'll send thee off to *St. Evreux* this night—drawn at full length, and coloured after nature.

Sir Geo. Tell them then, to add to the Ridicule, that Touchwood glories in the name of Husband! that he has found, in one Englishwoman, more Beauty than frenchmen ever saw, and more Goodness than frenchwomen can form an Idea of.

Dor. Well—enough of Description! Introduce me to this Phœnix—I came on purpose.

Sir Geo. Introduce—oh—aye to be sure - - - I believe Lady Frances is engaged just now, but—another time. (*Aside.*—How handsome the dog looks to day!)

Dor. Another time! But I have no other time—this is the only hour I can command this fortnight.

Sir Geo. (*Aside.*—I'm very glad to hear it!)—So then you cant dine with us to day? That's very unlucky.

Dor.—Dinner- - - -why yes, dinner?- - - -yes, I can, I believe, contrive to dine with you to day.

Sir Geo. Pshaw!—I meant Supper. You cant sup with us?

Dor. Supper?—dinner alone made me hesitate, Supper will be convenient. But, you are fortunate, if you had asked me any other night I could not have come.

Sir Geo. To night! What a Blunderer I am! now I recollect—we are particularly engaged this evening—But tomorrow—

Dor. Why look ye, Sir George, 'tis very plain you have no inclination to let me see your wife at all; so, here I sit (*throws himself on a sopha*)—there's my hat, and here are my legs. Now, I shant stir till I have seen her; I have no engagements—I'll breakfast dine and sup with you every day this week!

Sir Geo. Was there ever such a provoking wretch! But, to be plain with you Doricourt, you are an in-

conveniently agreeable fellow, and the women, I observe, always simper when you appear. For these reasons, in truth, I had rather, when you meet me with Lady Frances, that you should forget that we are acquainted—further than a Nod, a Smile, or a How—are ye?

Dor. What next!

Sir Geo. It is not merely yourself *in propria persona* that I object to; but, if you are intimate here, you'll make my house still more the Fashion than it is; and it is already so much so, that my Doors are of no use to me! I married Lady Frances to engross her thoughts, yet, such is the freedom of modern manners, that, spite of me, her eyes, thoughts, and conversation, are continually divided amongst all the Flirts and Coxcombs of Fashion.

Dor. To be sure I confess that kind of freedom is carried too far. 'Tis hard one cant have a Jewel in one's cabinet, but the whole Town must be gratified with viewing its lustre—(*Aside.*—He shant preach me out of seeing his Wife though!)

Sir Geo. Well now, that's reasonable. When you take time to reflect, Doricourt, I observe you always decide right, and therefore I hope—

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Sir, my Lady desires—

Sir Geo. I am particularly engaged now!

Dor. Oh! let that be no excuse I beg! (*springing from the Sopha*) Lead the way John, I'll wait on your Lady. [*Exit, following the Servant.*

Sir Geo. What evil Genius possessed me to talk about her! here Doricourt! (*runs out after him*) Doricourt!

Enter

Enter Mrs. Rackett, *and* Miss Ogle.

Followed by a Servant.

Mrs. R. Acquaint your Lady, that Mrs. Rackett and Miss Ogle are here. [*Exit Servant.*

Miss Ogle. I shall hardly know Lady Frances, 'tis so long since I was in Shropshire.

Mrs. R. And I'll be sworn you never saw her *out* of Shropshire.—Her father kept her locked up with his Caterpillars and Shells, and loved her beyond any thing—but a blue Butterfly and a petrified Frog!

Miss Ogle. Ha! ha! ha!—Well, 'twas a cheap way of breeding her;—you know, though a Lord, he was poor; and very high-spirited, though a Virtuoso. Her Operas, and *Robes de Cour*, in Town, would have consumed his Sea-weeds, Moths, and Monsters, in one Season. Sir George, I find, thinks his wife a most extraordinary creature:—but, his greatest boast is, that he has taught her to despise every thing like Fashionable Life.

Mrs. R. Has he so! There's great Impertinence in all that—we must do ourselves Justice! Let us, in spite to him, immediately try to give her a Taste for that high life—which merits not such treatment.

Miss Ogle. Agreed! 'tis just what I wish. She comes!

Enter Lady Frances.

Lady F. I beg a thousand pardons my dear Mrs. Rackett—Miss Ogle, I rejoice to see you.—I should have come to you sooner, but I was detained in conversation by Mr. Doricourt.

Mrs. R. Pray, make no apology. I am quite happy that we have your Ladyship in Town at last—what stay do you make?

Lady F. A short one! Sir George talks with Re-

gret of the scenes we have left, and, as the Ceremony of Presentation is over, will, I believe, soon return.

Miss Ogle. He cant be so cruel! Does your Ladyship wish to return so soon?

Lady F. I have not the Habit of consulting my own wishes; but I think, if they were to decide—we should not return immediately. I have yet hardly formed an Idea of London!

Mrs. R. I shall quarrel with your Lord and Master, if he dares think of depriving us of you so soon! How do you dispose of yourself to day?

Lady F. Sir George is going with me this morning to the Mercer's to chuse a Silk; and then—

Mrs. R. Chuse a Silk!—ha! ha! ha! Sir George chuses your Laces too I hope—your Gloves, and your Pincushions!

Lady F. Madam!

Mrs. R. I am glad however that you blush, my dear. Lady Frances—these are strange home-spun ways! If you act thus, pray keep it secret. Suppose the Town were to know, that your Husband chuses your Gowns!

Miss Ogle. You are very young, my Lady—and have been brought up in Solitude. The Maxims you learned amongst Wood-Nymphs wont pass current here, I assure you

Mrs. R. Why, my dear creature, you look quite frightened! Come, you shall go with us to drop a few Cards—then to an Auction Room—then we'll drive to Kensington. We shall be at home by Five to dress; and, in the Evening, I'll attend you to the Masquerade.

Lady F. I shall be very happy, if Sir George has no Engagements, to be of your party.

Mrs. R. What! Do you stand so low in your own opinion, that you dare not trust yourself without Sir George? You should have staid in the Country if you chuse to play Darby and Joan my Dear! 'tis an exhibition not calculated for London I assure you.

Miss Ogle. I suppose, my Lady, you and Sir George will be seen pacing it comfortably round the Green-Park—arm-in-arm; and then, go lovingly into the same Carriage—dine tête-à-tête, spend the evening at Piquet, and retire at Eleven! Such a snug plan may do for an Attorney and his Wife; but—for Lady Frances Touchwood!—'tis as unsuitable as Linsey-woolsey, or a black bonnet at the Opera!

Lady F. These are rather new doctrines to me! But, my dear Mrs. Rackett, you and Miss Ogle judge better than I can. As you observe—I am but young, and may have caught absurd opinions—but, here is Sir George!

Enter Sir George.

Sir Geo. (*aside.*) Death! another room full!

Lady F. My Love! Mrs. Rackett—Miss Ogle.

Mrs. R. Give you Joy, Sir George.—We came to rob you of Lady Frances for a few hours.

Sir Geo. A few Hours!

Lady F. Oh Yes! I am going to make Calls, and to an Auction-Room, and to the Park, and a hundred places!—It is quite ridiculous, I find, for married people to be always together—We shall be laughed at!

Sir Geo. I am astonished!—Mrs. Rackett, what does the dear creature mean?

Mrs. R. Mean, Sir George—what she says, I suppose.

Miss Ogle. Why, you know Sir, as Lady Frances had the Misfortune to be bred entirely in the Country—she cant be supposed to be versed in Fashionable Life.

Sir Geo. Heaven forbid she should! If she had been, Madam, she never would have been my Wife!

Mrs. R.—Can you be serious!

Sir Geo. Perfectly so. I should never have had Courage enough to have married—a Fine Lady.

Miss Ogle. Pray, Sir, what do you take a Fine Lady to be, that you express such Fear of her! (*Sneering.*)

Sir Geo. A Being easily described Madam; for she is seen every where—but in her own house. She sleeps at home, but she lives—all over the town. In her mind every sentiment gives place to the Passion for Conquest, and the Vanity of being particular. The feelings of Wife and Mother—are lost in the whirl of Dissipation. If she continues virtuous—she is fortunate; if she brings not ruin on her husband, 'tis by her dexterity at the Card-table.—Such a woman I take to be a perfect Fine-Lady!

Mrs. R. And you I take to be a slanderous Cynic of Two-and-thirty; twenty years hence one might have forgiven such Defamation! Now, Sir, hear my definition of a Fine Lady:—She is a creature for whom Nature has done much—and Education more; she has Taste, Elegance, Spirit, Understanding. In her Manner free—in her Morals she is nice. Her behaviour is undistinguishingly polite to her Husband, and to all others; her Sentiments are for their hours of retirement. In a word—a Fine Lady is the Life of conversation—the Spirit of society—the Joy of the public! Pleasure follows wherever she appears—the kindest wishes attend her through life.—My dear Lady Frances, to force your husband to acknowledge the correctness of my picture—make haste to adopt the character.

Lady F. 'Tis a delightful one! How can you dislike it, Sir George?—You placed Fashionable Life in a light so disgusting, that I hated what, on a nearer view, seems charming! I have hitherto lived in Obscurity—'tis time I should be a Woman of the World. I long to begin—my heart pants with expectation and delight!

Mrs. R. Let us then begin directly. I am impatient to introduce you to that Society which you were born to ornament and charm.

Lady F. Adieu—my Love!—We shall meet again at dinner. (*Going.*)

Sir Geo. I am in a dream.—Fanny!

Lady F. Sir George?

Sir Geo. Will you go without me!

Mrs. R. Will you go without me! Ha! ha! ha! what a pathetic address! Why, you would not be seen side by side always—like two beans on a stalk. Are you afraid to trust Lady Frances with me, Sir?

Sir Geo. Why, where can a man select a discreet protectress for his wife, in the present state of society? Formerly, there were Distinctions amongst ye—every class of females had its particular Description; Grandmothers were pious, Aunts circumspect, Old Maids censorious—But now! Aunts, Grandmothers, Girls, and Maiden-Gentlewomen, are all the same creature—a Wrinkle more or less is the sole difference between ye.

Miss Ogle. That Maiden-Gentlewomen have lost their Censoriousness is surely not in your catalogue of grievances!

Sir Geo. Indeed it is—and ranked amongst the grievances the most serious. Things went well, Madam, when the tongues of three or four Old Maids kept all the wives and Daughters of a parish in Awe! They were the dragons that guarded the Hesperian fruit;—and I wonder they have not been obliged by Act of Parliament to resume their function.

Mrs. R. Ha! ha! ha! and pensioned I suppose, for making strict enquiries into the lives and conversations of their Neighbours.

Sir Geo. With all my heart, and impowered to oblige every woman to conform her conduct to her real Situation. You, for instance, are a Widow; your air should be sedate, your dress grave, your deportment matronly, in all things an Example to the young women growing up around you!—Instead of which—you are dressed for Conquest, and think of nothing but of ensnaring hearts—are a Wit and A Fine Lady.

Mrs. R. Bear witness!—a Wit! and a Fine Lady! Who would have expected an Eulogy from such an ill-natured mortal! Valour to a Soldier, Wisdom to a Judge, or Glory to a Prince, are not more than such a character to a Woman.

Miss Ogle. Sir George, I see, languishes for the charming society of a Century and a half ago; when a grave Squire, and a still graver Dame, surrounded by a sober family, formed a stiff group in a mouldy old house in the corner of a Park.

Mrs. Rack. Delightful Serenity! Undisturbed by any noise, but the cawing of Rooks, and the quarterly rumbling of an old family coach on a state visit; with the happy intervention of a friendly call from the parish Apothecary; or the Curate's wife—with her formal Curtesy—and her "How do you do Ma'am!" (*Curtesying stiffly.*)

Sir Geo. And what is the Society of which *you* boast?—a mere Chaos; in which all distinction of Rank is lost—in a ridiculous Affectation of Ease, and every different Order of beings is huddled together. In the same *select party*, you will often find the wife of a Bishop and of a Sharper, of an Earl and of a Fiddler. In short, 'tis one universal masquerade, but where all assume the same disguise of dress and manners.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Mr. Flutter. [*Exit.*

Sir Geo.—Here comes an illustration. Now I defy you to tell, from his appearance, whether Flutter is a Privy Counsellor or a Mercer—a Lawyer or a Grocer's Apprentice.

Enter FLUTTER.

Flut. Oh, just which you please, Sir George,—so you dont make me a Lord Mayor. Ah, Mrs.

Rackett!—Lady Frances, your most obedient; you look—now hang me if that's not provoking! had your Gown been of another Colour, I should have said the prettiest thing you ever heard in your life.

Miss Ogle. Pray give it us!

Flut. I was yesterday at Mrs. Bloomer's. She was dressed all in green; no other colour to be seen, but that of her Face and Neck. So says I—my dear Mrs. Bloomer—you look like a Carnation just beginning to burst its green pod.

Sir Geo. And what said her husband?

Flut. Her husband! Why he dully said—a Cucumber would have been a happier Simile.

Sir Geo. But there *are* husbands, Sir, who, rather than have amended your comparison, would have considered it as an impertinence.

Flut. What harm can there be in Compliments—they keep up the Spirits! You, Sir George, cannot fear they may be mischievous, who, of all people breathing, have reason to be convinced of your Lady's attachment—every body talks of it;—that little Bird there, that she killed out of Jealousy, the most extraordinary instance of Affection that ever was given.

Lady F. I kill a Bird through Jealousy! Mr. Flutter, how can you impute such a cruelty to me?

Sir Geo. I could have forgiven you if you had!

Flut. What a blundering fool am I!—No, no—now I remember—'twas your bird Lady Frances—that's it—your Bullfinch, which Sir George, in one of the Refinements of his passion, sent into the wide world to seek its fortune.—He took it for a Knight in disguise.

Lady Fran. Is it possible! Oh, Sir George, could I have imagined that it was you who deprived me of a creature I was so fond of!

Sir Geo. Mr. Flutter, you are one of those busy, idle, meddling, people, who, from mere vacuity of mind, are the most dangerous inmates in a family;—who have neither feelings nor opinions of their

own, but, like an Echo convey those of every blockhead who comes in their way; thinking themselves excused because they *mean* no harm, though broken friendships, discords, or murder, are the consequences of their indiscretion.

Flut. (*taking out his Pocket Book*) Vacuity of Mind!—what was next? I'll write down this sermon, 'tis the first I have heard since my Grandmother's funeral.

Miss Ogle. Come, Lady Frances, you see what a cruel creature your loving husband can be—so let us leave him.

Sir Geo. Madam—Lady Frances shall not go!

Lady Fran. Shall not, Sir George!—This is the first time such an expression— (*weeping.*)

Sir Geo. My Love! my Life!

Lady Fran. Dont imagine I'll be treated like a child! denied what I wish, and then pacified by sweet words.

Miss Ogle. (*apart*) The Bullfinch!—that's an excellent subject; never let it down.

Lady F. I see plainly you would deprive me of the plèasures of Society, as well as of my sweet bird, out of pure Love!—Barbarous Man!

Sir Geo. 'Tis well Madam; your resentment of that circumstance proves to me, what I did not before suspect—that you are deficient both in Tenderness and Understanding.—Tremble to think the hour approaches in which you would give the world for such a proof of my Love! Go, Madam, give yourself to the public, abandon your heart to Dissipation, and see if, in the scenes of Gaiety and Folly that await you, you can find a recompense for the lost affection of a doating husband! [*Exit.*

Flut. What a fine thing it is to have the gift of Speech! Your great Speakers, sooner or later, always gain their Object—save and except being overpowered at Home notwithstanding.

Lady F. He is really angry—I cannot go.

Mrs. R. Not go! Foolish creature! you are arrived at the moment which, some time or other, was sure to arrive;—and every thing depends upon the use you make of it.

Miss Ogle. Come Lady Frances! dont hesitate—the minutes are precious!

Lady F. I could find in my heart—and yet I wont give up! If I should in this instance, he'll expect it for ever. [*Exeunt Lady F. and Mrs. Rackett.*

Miss Ogle. There, you act now like a woman of Spirit! [*Exit.*

Flut. A fair tug—between Inclination and Duty. But Inclination, as of old, leads off in Triumph! [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

AN AUCTION ROOM.

Pictures, Busts, &c. &c.

SILVERTONGUE *in the pulpit; with his Clerk, and a Croud.*

Silv. Going!—for Seventy Guineas—three Coins—undoubted Originals—genuine—brass—for Seventy Guineas only—nobody bid more!—going—gone!

Gent. Mr. Silvertongue, are these Medals genuine?

Silv. Infallibly so, Sir—I know the Age of a coin by the *taste*, and can fix the birth-day of a medal, *Anno Mundi*, or *Anno Domini*, though the green rust should have eaten up every Character.

Another Gent. My Taste is for Pictures: pray what have you to give us in that way?

Silv. Your taste is for Pictures, Sir,—Oh, we have every thing, and every body—I have *Parmegiano, Sal Rosa, Metzu, Tarbaek,* and *Vandermeer,* in the

different rooms. You may perceive the Relief of *Woovermans*, the Spirit of *Teniers*, the Colouring of the Venetian school, and the Correctness of the Roman. *Claude* you'll discover by his Sheep, and *Ruysdael* by his Water. Here the Rapidity of *Tintoret's* pencil strikes at the first glance, there the Harmony of *Vandyk*, and the Glow of *Corregio*, point out their Masters.

Enter LADY FRANCES, MRS. RACKETT, *and* MISS OGLE,

And come down from the back of the Stage, looking at Pictures, &c.

Silv. Come, this is nearly the last Lot—the Model of a City, in Wax.

Gent. The Model of a City! what City?

Silv. That I have not been able to discover; but, call it ROME, PEKIN, or LONDON—'twill be all the same: you'll find in it the same jarring Interests, the same Passions, Virtues, and Vices, whatever the Name.

Another Gent. You may as well present us with a Map of *Terra Incognita.*

Silv. Oh—pardon me—pardon me, Sir! Imagination may convert this into endless Amusement:—for instance, the house on the Right, who shall say there are no prudes there, anxious about the reputations of —their Neighbours. This elegant mansion, on the Left, decorated with Corinthian Pillars, who wants proof that it is the habitation of a Statesman, of course of—Patriotism and Wisdom? Here, is a Hall of some Commercial Company, and, near it, a Workhouse—how comfortable the idea that the rich steams from the one encrease the nourishment in the other!—I perceive, Sir, that you are considering whether the city is *English?* Here is a Church—we'll pass over that—the doors are shut; the Parson-

age-house—catches the eye; could we take a peep, we might perhaps discover the Doctor asleep upon a volume of The Fathers, and his Lady—rouging for a Masquerade; it would, Sir, establish the point—that it is a *foreign* city.—Who buys the City?

Lady Frances *and* Miss Ogle *come forward, followed by* Courtall.

Lady F. I wish Sir George were here. This man follows me about, and stares at me in such a way, that I am quite uneasy.

Miss Ogle. He has travelled, and is heir to an immense estate, so—is assumptive by Privilege.

Court. You are very cruel Ladies. Miss Ogle—you will not let me speak to you! As to this scornful Beauty, she has frowned me dead fifty times.

Lady F. Sir—I am a married woman.

Court. 'Twould be a shame if such a charming woman were not married. But, I see you are a Daphne—just come from your Sheep, and your Meadows, your Crook, and your Water-fall. Pray now, who is the happy *Damon* to whom you have vowed eternal truth and constancy?

Miss Ogle. Mr. Courtall—'tis Lady Frances Touchwood to whom you are speaking.

Court. Lady Frances! (*Aside*, that's Saville's old flame!) I beg your Ladyship's pardon—I ought at once to have known your name—for I have long heard that it is that of the finest woman in England.

Mrs. Rackett *comes forward.*

Lady F. (*Apart*) My dear Mrs. Rackett—I am frightened! Here's a man making love to me, though he knows I am married.

Mrs. R. Oh, dont mind him. Was you at the Concert last night, Mr. Courtall?

Court. I looked in. 'Twas impossible to stay—

no body there but Antiques. You'll be at Lady Brilliant's Masquerade to night, doubtless?

Mrs. R. Yes, I go with Lady Frances.

Lady F. (*to Miss Ogle*) Bless me, I did not know this Gentleman was acquainted with Mrs. Rackett. I behaved so rude to him!

Mrs. R. Come (*looking at her watch*) 'tis past three. I protest if we dont fly to Kensington, we shall not find a soul there.

Lady F. Wont this Gentleman go with us?

Court. (*looking surprised*) To be sure—you make me happy beyond expression!

Mrs. R. Oh, never mind him; he'll follow.

[*Exeunt Lady F. Mrs. R. and Miss Ogle.*

Court. Hur-r-r-m—your reserved Ladies are like Ice—no sooner begin to soften than they melt.

[*Following.*

ACT

ACT THE THIRD.

Scene I. MR. HARDY'S. LETITIA SEATED.

Enter Mrs. Rackett.

Mrs. R. Come prepare, prepare—your Lover is coming!

Let. My Lover! Confess now that my absence from Dinner was a Mortification to him.

Mrs. R. I am not absolutely sure that it spoiled his appetite; he ate as if he was hungry, and drank his wine as though he liked it.

Let. What was the Apology?

Mrs. R. That you was indisposed;—but, I gave him a Hint that your extreme Bashfulness could not support his Eye!

Let. If I can comprehend him, Awkwardness is no less than Bashfulness one of the last faults he can pardon—so, expect to see me transformed into the veriest Maukin, as a new source of dislike.

Mrs. R. You persevere then?

Let. Certainly. I know the scheme is rash, and the Event important;—it either makes Doricourt mine by all the tenderest ties of passion, or deprives me of him for ever; but—never to be his wife will afflict me less, than to be his wife and not be beloved.

Mrs. R. Then you wont trust to the good old Maxim—" Marry first, and Love will follow"?

Let. As readily as I would venture my last Guinea, that Good Fortune might follow. The woman that has not touched the Heart before she is led to the Altar, has scarcely a chance of charming it when security prevents her value from being raised by the risk of losing her—But here he comes! I'll disappear for a moment—Dont spare me!

Mrs. R. Oh, I'll do you all the mischief you wish!

[*Exit Letitia.*

Enter DORICOURT

Without seeing Mrs. Rackett.

Dor. So! (*looking up at a picture*) this is my mistress I presume; *sur ma foi!* the painter has hit her off. The downcast eye—the blushing cheek—timid—apprehensive—bashful—A Prayer-book and a Tear would have made her *La Bella Magdalena*—

Give me a Fair-one in whose touching mien
A Mind, a Soul, a polish'd Art, are seen,
Whose Gesture speaks, beams intellectual fire,
She, speeds the darts which endless Love inspire!—

Mrs. R. Is that an Impromptu? (*touching him on the shoulder with her Fan.*)

Dor. (*Starting.*)——Madam!——(*Aside.* Finely caught!)—Not absolutely, I was trying it during the Dessert, as a Motto for *your* Picture.

Mrs. R. Gallantly turned! but, wasn't it for Miss Hardy's? I suspect however that her charms have made no violent impression—and who can wonder? the poor Girl's defects are so obvious.

Dor. Defects—

Mrs. R. Merely those of Education. Her father's mismanagement ruined her—*mauvaise honte*—

conceit—and ignorance—all unite in the Charmer you are to marry!

Dor. Marry?—I marry *such* a woman! Your picture I hope is overcharged;—I ally myself with *mauvaise honte*, pertness, and ignorance!

Mrs. R. Thank Hymen that ugliness and ill temper are not added to the list. You allow she is handsome?

Dor. Half her personal Beauty would be sufficient; but, were the Medicean Venus animated for me, and with a vulgar soul, as she awoke to life *I* should change to marble and become the Statue.

Mrs. R. Bless us—we are in a hopeful way then!

Dor. (*Aside.* But there must be some Envy in the Widow's description)—Ha! ha! I must allow for a Lady's painting! Miss Hardy, I have been assured, though not spirited, is elegant and accomplished.

Mrs. R. (*Aside.* I'll be even with him for that.)—Ha! ha! I protest I had no design upon you myself Doricourt—I only meant to encrease the *éclat* of her appearance—Here comes the Lady, she will herself announce her Elegance and Accomplishments!

Enter LETITIA, *running.*

Let. La! Cousin—do you know that our John—oh, dear heart! I didn't see you, Sir! (*hanging down her head, and hiding behind Mrs. Rackett.*)

Mrs. R. Fie Letitia! Mr. Doricourt thinks your manners elegant; stand forward, and confirm his opinion.

Let. No, no, let me skulk; he's my Sweetheart—and 'tis impudent to look one's Sweetheart in the face, you know!

Mrs. R. (*apart*) You'll allow in future for a Lady's painting, Sir, Ha! ha! ha!

Dor. I am astonished!

Let. (*pretending to whisper*) Well, hang it, I must take heart at last! Why he is but a man you know

Cousin; and I'll let him see I wasn't born in a wood, and yet to be scared by an Owl! (*Advances, and looks at him through her fingers*) He! he! he! (*Goes up to him, and makes an awkward formal curtesy. He bows.*) You have been a great Traveller, Sir, they tell me!

Dor. I have travelled, Madam.

Let. Then I wish you'd tell us about the fine Sights you saw, when you went over-Sea.—I have read, in a Book, that there are some countries where the men and women are all Horses—did you ever see 'em?

Mrs. R. Mr. Doricourt is not prepared, my dear, I fancy, for these enquiries. He is reflecting on the sagacity of the question, and will answer you when —he can.

Let. Why! he's as slow in speech as Aunt Margery when she is labouring through Thomas Aquinas;—look!—how he stands gaping, like mum-chance.

Mrs. R. A little Discretion! Miss Hardy; or your Lover may not perceive your accomplishments and your elegance!

Let. Hold your tongue!—sure I may say what I please before I am married, if I cant afterwards. D'ye think a body doesn't know how to talk to a Sweetheart—it isn't the first I have had.

Dor. Indeed!

Let. O lud—he speaks! (*runs from him.*) Why, you must know there was the Curate at home—when Papa was a-hunting he used to come a suitoring, and making speeches to me out of books. No body knows what a *mort* of fine things he used to say to me—and call me Venis, and Jubah, and Dinah!

Dor. And pray, fair lady, how did you answer him?

Let. Why I used to say—Look ye Mr. Curate, dont think for to manage me with your Flim-flams;—for a better man than ever trod in your shoes, is coming over-Sea to marry me.—But, ifags! I begin

to think I was out—Parson Dobbins was the sprightfuller man of the two!

Dor. Surely, this cannot be really Miss Hardy!

Let. Laws! why dont you know me—you saw me to day! But I was daunted before my Father, and the Lawyer, and all them, and I did not care to speak out—so may be you thought I couldn't!—but, I can talk as fast as any body, when the ice is broke; and, having shown my Qualifications I hope you'll like me the better!

Enter HARDY.

Har. But, I foresee this wont do! Mr. Doricourt—mayhap you take my daughter for a Fool, but you are mistaken, she is a sensible Girl—as any in England.

Dor. She has an uncommon Understanding, Sir. (*Aside*—I did not think he had been such a Blockhead.)

Let. (*Aside.*—My father will undo the whole.) Laws! Papa—how can you think he could take me for a fool, when every body knows I beat the Potecary at Conundrums last Christmas-time? And, didn't I make a string of names, all Riddles, for the Ladies Diary?—There was—what a Lamb says—that was *Ba*; and three letters—k, e, r, *ker*—Baker. There was—

Har. Dont stand *ba-a-ing* here. You'll make me mad! I tell you Sir that, for all that, she's peculiarly sensible.

Dor. Sir, I give all possible credit to your assertion.

Let. Laws! Papa—do go along! If you stand watching, how can my Sweetheart break his mind, and tell me how he admires me?

Dor. It is difficult indeed, Madam.

Har. I tell you Letty, I'll have no more of this.—I foresee well enough—

Let. Laws! Dont snub me before my Husband that is to be—You'll teach him to snub *me* too;—I believe, by his Looks, he'd like to begin now! so come and talk with me Papa. Cousin—you may tell the Gentleman what a *Genus* I have—how I can cut out watch-papers, and work cat-gut.

[*Exeunt Hardy and Letitia.*

Mrs. R. What think you of my Painting now?

Dor. Outline, Madam! The Original outdoes the Sketch.

Mrs. R. How does she strike you altogether?

Dor. Like a good Design spoilt by adventitious circumstances. I observed an Expression in her eye incongruous with the folly of her lips.

Mrs. R. Aye—but—at her age, when education has stopped, and Manner is become Nature—hopes of Improvement—

Dor. Would be as rational as hopes of restoring spoiled wine. But if Doricourt has a wife incapable of improvement, it must be—because there is no room for it.

Mrs. R. Well, I may congratulate you, on perceiving no melancholy in your air from the adventure!

Dor. No. So benign were the stars at the hour of my birth, that, though misfortunes go plump to the bottom of my heart, yet, as when pebbles sink in water, the surface is soon unruffled. I shall set off for the other world—or for Bath, to-night; whether to the one in a chaise and four, or to the other in a tangent from the aperture of a Pistol, deserves consideration. (*Going.*)

Mrs. R. Whichsoever of the journies you take, I entreat you postpone until tomorrow! You must be at the Masquerade to night.

Dor. Masquerade!

Mrs. R. Why not? Even though you should resolve to visit the other world, you may as well, you know, take leave of this pleasantly.

Dor. Well, Ladies are the best Philosophers! Expect me at the Masquerade. [*Exit.*

Mrs. R. He's a charming fellow—I think Letitia shant have him! (*Going.*)

Enter HARDY.

Har. What's he gone?

Mrs. R. Yes; and I am glad he is—you would have ruined us. Now I beg, Mr. Hardy, you wont interfere in this business, it is a little out of your way. [*Exit.*

Har. Hang me if I dont though. I foreknow very clearly what will be the end of it if I leave ye to yourselves. I'll follow him to the Masquerade, and tell him all.—Let me see, what shall my Dress be—A Great Mogul? No.—I foresee the Laugh would be *at* me!—An Ambassador? No—he is all open Honour! my aim is Deception—I'll go as a Jew. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

COURTALL'S.

Enter COURTALL, SAVILLE, *and three others, from an apartment at the back of the Stage, the last three tipsy.*

Court. You shant go yet—Another Bottle, and another Catch!

First Gent. If you get any more wine into me—I'll give you leave to hang the Bottle.—Why, I am going to the Masquerade; Jack—you know who I mean—is to meet me, we are to have a leap at the new Lustres.

Second Gent. And I am going too—as Harlequin;

(*hiccups*)—my Zig Zags will do for the Harlequinades. Come, where are our Dominos? we must disguise.

Third Gent. We are already disguised I think—bid them draw up! [*Exeunt the three Gentlemen.*

Sav. Thy skull, Courtall, is an Egg-shell!

Court. Nay, then you are gone too! Such matter-of-fact men as you never aspire to Similes—but in your cups.

Sav. No, no; I am tolerably steady—but the fumes of the wine pass directly through thy Egg-shell, and leave thy brain as cool as---Hey! I must be quite sober, for my Similes fail me.

Court. Then we'll sit down here, and have one sober bottle—John! (*Wine brought.*)

Sav. I'll not swallow another drop, though the juice should be the true Falernian.

Court. By the bright eyes of her you love—you shall drink her health.

Sav. Ah! (*sitting down*) her I loved is gone! (*sighing*) she is married.

Court. Then, bless your stars you are not her husband! I would be husband to no woman in England, who was not rich and ugly.

Sav. Wherefore ugly?

Court. Because she could not have the conscience to exact that Admiration which a Pretty Wife expects;—or, if she should, her resentments would not make me uneasy.

Sav. Thou art a most licentious fellow!

Court. Still, I have a great respect for Wives—so —here's to the prettiest Wife in England—Lady Frances Touchwood!

Sav. Lady Frances Touchwood! I rise to drink her. (*drinks*) How came Lady Frances into your head? I never knew you give a woman of high Character before.

Court. Ah!—the Wine works again—you are a Wag!—for you have heard me give full half a dozen

Women of Fashion. But, what do you take a woman of High Character to be? (*sneering.*)

Sav. Such a woman as Lady Frances Touchwood, Sir.

Court. Oh, I remember, you was an Adorer of her's!—Why didn't you marry her?

Sav. I had not the arrogance to look so high. Had my Fortune been worthy of her, she should not have been ignorant of my Admiration.

Court. Precious Fellow! What, I suppose you would not dare to tell her that you admire her, now?

Sav. No—nor you.

Court. By Cupid—I have told her so.

Sav. Have!—impossible.

Court. Ha! ha! ha!—is it so?

Sav. Why, how did she receive the declaration?

Court. Why, in the old way; blushed, and frowned, and said—she was married.

Sav. What amazing things thou art capable of!—A Roman would sooner have breathed vows to a Vestal, than I have prophaned her ears with such a declaration.

Court. I shall meet her at Lady Brilliant's to-night—where I shall repeat it; and I have no doubt—under a Mask—she'll hear it without a blush or a frown.

Sav. You wrong her, Sir, (*rising*)—she will not.

Court. She will! (*rising*) Nay, I'd venture to lay a round sum that I prevail on her to trust herself with me—all in honorable confidence! I mean.

Sav. Preposterous Vanity! From this moment I am convinced that the other victories you boast are as slanderous—as your pretended influence with Lady Frances.

Court. Pretended! Why how should such a fellow as you now, who never soared beyond compliments to a cherry-cheeked daughter of a Ploughman in Norfolk, judge of the influence of a man of my Figure

and Stile? I could shew thee a list, in which there are names to shake thy faith in the whole sex! and, to that list I have no doubt of adding the name of Lady —

Sav. Hold Sir! My ears cannot bear the prophanation. You cannot—dare not—approach her! For your life, you would not darê mention Love to her!—her Look would chill the word, whilst it hovered on thy licentious lips!

Court. Whu! whu! Well, we shall see! This evening, by Jupiter, the trial shall be made.

Sav. I think thou darest not! But, my life, my honour, on her Purity. [*Exit.*

Court. Hot-headed fool!—But, since he has brought it to this point—I'll try what can be done with her Ladyship—(*musing*) But softly!—softly—a moment —cries Conscience! Wilt thou attempt to blemish her character for Virtue—merely to keep up thy own for Vice!—a Qualm! on such a subject! Pshaw, I have no time to muse on any thing—but the *Means.* (*Pauses, then rings*). She's frost-work, and the prejudices of education yet strong—ergo—passionate professions will only inflame her pride, and put her on her guard. For other Arts then!

Enter DICK.

Dick, do you know any of the servants at Sir George Touchwood's?

Dick. Yes Sir; I knows the Groom, and one of the Housemaids: for the matter-o'-that, she's my own Cousin, and it was my Mother that holped her to the place.

Court. Do you know Lady Frances's maid?

Dick. I cant say as how I am acquainted with she.

Court. Do you know Sir George's Valet?

Dick. No Sir. But Sally is very thick with Mr. Gibson—Sir George's Gentleman.

Court. Then go there directly, and employ Sally

to discover whether her Master goes to Lady Brilliant's this evening; and, if he does, the name of the shop that sold his Habit.

Dick. Yes, Sir.

Court. Be exact in your intelligence, and come to me at White's. [*Exit Dick.*] If I cannot otherwise succeed, I will, in the dress of her husband, beguile her to trust herself with me.—So fine a woman—the triumph over Saville—are each a sufficient motive; united, they are irresistible. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

THE STREET.

Enter SAVILLE.

Sav. The Air has recovered me. But what have the wine fumes made me do! Perhaps my Petulance may be the Cause of insult, to her whose honour I asserted. His Vanity is piqued—and, where Women are concerned, Courtall can be a Villain—

Enter DICK. *Bows, and passes hastily.*

Sav. Ha! I believe that's his Servant—Dick!

Dick. (*returning*) Sir.

Sav. Where are you going, Dick?

Dick. Going. I am going, Sir, where my Master bid me.

Sav. Well answered;—but I have a particular reason for my enquiry, and you must tell me.

Dick. Why then Sir I am going to the next street, to call upon a Cousin of mine that lives at Sir George Touchwood's.

Sav. Very well.—There (*gives him money*) you must make your Cousin drink my health—What are you going about?

Dick. Why, Sir, I believe 'tis no harm, or elseways, I'm sure I wouldn't blab. I'm only going to ax if Sir George Touchwood goes to the Masquerade, and what Dress he wears.

Sav. Enough. I am going to call there this instant myself Dick, but, though I have a reason for wishing to know how both will be dressed, I cannot well make the enquiry myself. If you'll call when you've learnt, and acquaint me with your Cousin's intelligence, I'll double the trifle I have given you.

Dick. Oh, I'll find out, and let you know Sir never fear—You may trust my Honor! [*Exit.*

Sav. Surely the Occasion may justify the Means. I cannot venture to inform Sir George, or, in endeavouring to prevent uncertain, I shall cause certain, mischief. It is doubly my Duty to be, and I will be, Lady Frances's guardian. Courtall, I see, is planning an artful scheme—but Saville shall out-plot him!

[*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

SIR GEORGE TOUCHWOOD'S.

Enter SIR GEORGE *and* SAVILLE.

Sav. Why, Sir George, as you quitted Lady Frances I perceived tears in her eyes—no severe affliction, I trust, has—

Sir Geo. 'Tis *I* am afflicted—at the departure of my Dream of happiness! Lady Frances and I are disunited.

Sav. Presto! Why you have been in Town but ten days; deeds of separation follow your arrival with more even than their *usual* Celerity!

Sir Geo. Pho! I mean our Minds are disunited; she no longer places her whole delight in me—she has yielded herself to the World!

Sav. Why did'nt you bring her to Town in a Cage —then she might have had no more than a Peep at it. But, after all, what has the World done so to offend you! A twelvemonth since, you was the gayest fellow in it.—If any body asked who dressed best? Sir George Touchwood.—Who the most given to Dissipation? Sir George Touchwood.—And, now, Sir George is metamorphosed into a sour Censor, and talks of fashionable life with as much bitterness as the crabbed Censor of old in Rome.

Sir Geo. Society wore a different complexion the moment I became possessed of such a jewel as Lady Frances; that, in which I lived with so much *éclat*, became the object of my terror; and, I now think of the manners of polite life—as I do of the atmosphere of a Pest-house. My wife is already infected; she was set upon this morning by Maids, Widows, and Bachelors, who carried her off, in spite of my displeasure, in triumph!

Sav. Had there been no opposition, there would have been no triumph. I have heard the whole story from Mrs. Rackett, and I assure you Lady Frances did not enjoy the morning at all,—she wished for you fifty times.

Sir Geo. Indeed!

Sav. Here she comes to receive your Apology. If she is a mere Woman, her Displeasure will rise in proportion to your Contrition. However I'll leave you—matrimonial duets are seldom pleasing to auditors. [*Exit.*

Enter Lady Frances.

Sir Geo. The sweet sorrow that glitters in these eyes I cannot bear (*embracing her*) Look chearfully you Rogue!

Lady F. I cannot look otherwise, if you are pleased with me.

Sir Geo. Well, Fanny, to day you made your *entrée*

into the fashionable world; tell me honestly the Impression you received.

Lady F. Indeed, Sir George, I was so hurried from place to place, that I had not time to scrutinize what my impressions were.

Sir Geo. That's the very Spirit of the life you have chosen.

Lady F. Every body about me seemed as though they hoped to be happy elsewhere.

Sir Geo. And you like this?

Lady F. One must like what the rest of the world likes.

Sir Geo. Pernicious maxim!

Lady F. But, my dear Sir George, you have not promised to go with me to the Masquerade!

Sir Geo. 'Twould be a shocking Indecorum to be seen together, you know.

Lady F. Oh, no; I asked Mrs. Rackett, and she told me we might be seen together at the Masquerade without being laughed at.

Sir Geo. Really!

Lady F. Indeed, I wish it was the Fashion for married people to be always in each other's society. I have more heartfelt satisfaction in an hour of converse with you, than a month of amusement could give me without you.

Sir Geo. My sweet Creature!—how that confession charms me! Let us begin the Fashion.

Lady F. Oh! impossible. We should not gain a single proselyte;—you cant conceive what spiteful things would be said of us. At Kensington to day a Lady, whom we saw at Court when we were presented, met us; she lifted up her hands in amazement!—Bless me! said she—here's Lady Frances without Sir Hurlo! My dear Mrs. Rackett, consider what an important charge you have—take her home again! or some Enchanter, on a flying dragon, will descend and carry her off. Oh, said another, you may depend upon it she has a clue at her heel, like

the peerless Rosamond; her tender Swain would never have trusted her so far, without means of discovering her.

Sir Geo. Heaven! How shall Innocence preserve its Lustre amidst manners so corrupt?—My dear Fanny, I feel a sentiment for thee at this moment tenderer than Love—more animated than passion. I view thy progress through the infectious regions of fashion—with anxious terror!

Enter GIBSON.

Gib. You talked, Sir, something about going to the Masquerade?

Sir Geo. Well!

Gib. Isn't it? haven't you? I thought, Sir, you had forgot to order a Dress. (*Aside.* What, now, can it signify to Sal, what his dress is to be?)

Lady F. Well considered Gibson.—Come, will you be Jew, Turk, a Chinese Emperor, or a Ballad-singer!

Sir Geo. Neither, my Love, I cant take the trouble to support a Character.

Lady F. You'll wear a Domino then:—I saw a pink one trimmed with blue, at the shop where I bought my Habit—would you like it?

Sir Geo. Any thing—any thing.

Lady F. Go about it directly, Gibson.—A pink Domino, trimmed with blue, and a hat of the same. [*Exit Gibson.*] You have not seen my Dress yet, it is most beautiful, I long to have it on! [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I. A MASQUERADE.

MUSIC. *A Party of Masqueraders, dancing in front. A variety of* CHARACTERS *pass and repass.*

Enter FOLLY—*with his Cap and Bells.*

Mask. Hey! Tom Fool! What Business have you here?

Folly. What Slave! Affront a Prince surveying—his own Dominions!

(*Struts through the Crowd.*)

A MOUNTEBANK *advances, followed by his* MERRY ANDREW *who continues playing tricks around him.*

Merry Andrew. Here! here! here!—who'll buy my Master's Nostrums—who'll buy?

Mount. Nostrums! Ladies and Gentlemen, most excellent Nostrums—who'll buy?

Masks. What are they? what are they?

(*They all come round him.*)

Mount. Different sorts—for different Customers. Here's an excellent *Powder* for Ladies, quenches the rage for Gaming by making them——sleep at Night. Husbands! here's an *Eye-water* thickens the visual membrane, prevents its seeing every cobweb——good

for Jealousy. Here's a *Narcotic* for Members of Parliament, produces Repose——in every state of the Conscience! Here—here's a *Corroborant* for the Clergy, provided they effect an advantageous—— Change of Living! Projectors! here's a *Decoction* dissipates Airy Castles, by rectifying the Fumes—— of empty stomachs! Here—but where shall I find it —Oh! here's a *Quieting-draught* for Lawyers!—— a great promoter of Modesty.

A Mask. Mr. Mountebank! have you no Anodyne for young Heirs, whose Uncles and Fathers are healthy?

Mount. An *Anodyne* for young Heirs—no. But, I have an *Alterative*, produces Abstinence in *Creditors*, when GENTLEMEN plead their Privilege—of breaking a Promise!

First Mask. Come along—come along;—here are Customers for your whole cargo.

(*Conducts him in Front, between the masqueraders and the Audience; and they pass behind. Music.*)

Enter HARDY, *dressed as a Jew.*

Hardy. Why, isn't it a Shame to see so many stout well-built young fellows, masquerading and cutting capers to Music here at home—instead of making the French cut capers to a tune from our Cannon— or exercising the Spaniards in an English *fandango.* —I foresee the end of all this!

1*st Mask*, Why, thou testy Israelite, back to Duke's Place! and preach thy Tribe into a Subscription for the good of the land—on whose milk and honey ye fatten. Where are your Joshuas and your Gideons—eh! What—*all* dwindled into Stockbrokers, Pedlars, and Ragmen?

Har. Vat shure—not all! Shum of us have dwindled into—Men of Fashion! (*Aside.* Ha! here are Cousin Rackett and her Party; they shant know me.) (*Music.*)

Enter Mrs. RACKETT, *Lady* FRANCES, *Sir* GEORGE, *and* FLUTTER.

Mrs. R. Look at this swarthy Jew! he must be a real Levite by his Figure. You have surely practised the flesh-hook a long time friend, to have raised that goodly presence.

Har. Vy, about ash long, my brisk Vidow, ash you have been angling for a second Hushband! My hook ish better baited than your'sh, you catch I shee only Gudgeon! (*pointing at* FLUTTER.)

Flut. Oh! what we have here some Genius our Hostess has hired, to entertain the company with *accidental* sallies.—Let me look at your Common-Place book friend,—I want a few good things—

Har. I know it! but you vilsh spoil dem in repeating! Or, if not, dey vilsh gain you no reputation—nobody vilsh believe dey are your own!

Sir Geo. He knows ye Flutter! The bustling Gentleman fancies himself a Wit I see.

Har. Dares no depending upon vatsh *you* shee; —de eyes of de shellous are not to be trushted! Try to shee clear vensh you look after your Ladee!

Flut. He knows you, Sir George!

Sir Geo. (*Aside.*)—What!—am I the Town-talk?

Har. (*Aside.*) I can neither see Doricourt nor Letty. I must find them out. [*Exit.*

Mrs. R. Well, Lady Frances, is not all this charming? Could you have conceived such a brilliant assemblage of objects?

Lady F. Delightful!—The days of Enchantment are restored! The Columns glow with Sapphires and Rubies. Emperors and Fairies, Beauties and Dwarfs, meet me at every step.

Sir Geo. How lively are first impressions on sensible minds! In two hours—Vapidity and Languor will take place of that exquisite sense of Joy that flutters thy susceptible heart.

Mrs. R. What an inhuman creature! Fate has not

allowed us these Sensations above ten times in the whole course of our lives;—and would you have us suppress them by Anticipation?

Flut. Oh! your wise men are the greatest fools upon earth! whilst they *reason* about enjoyments, and develope the *Philosophy* of pleasure, the Essence escapes.—Look, Lady Frances, do you see that figure strutting in the dress of an Emperor? he has stolen a march upon the servants at the door—his father sells Oranges in Botolph Lane. That Gypsey—is a Maid of Honour; and that Undertaker, a Physician!

Lady F. Why, you know every body.

Flut. Oh, every creature—a Mask is nothing at all to me.—I can give you the history of half the people here. In the next apartment there is a whole family who, to my knowledge, have lived on Water-cresses this month, to make a figure here to night. To make up for that however, they'll cram their pockets with cold ducks and chickens—for a Carnival tomorrow.

Lady F. Oh! I should like to see this provident family.

Flut. Honour me with your arm.

[*Ex. Flutter and Lady Frances.*

Mrs. R. Come, Sir George, you shall be *my* Beau. We'll make the tour of the rooms, and meet them. Oh! your pardon, you must follow Lady Frances, or the Wit and Graces of Mr. Flutter may drive you out of her head. Ha! ha! ha! [*Exit.*

Sir George. I was about to follow her, but, now I dare not! How can I be such a Fool as to be governed by the fear of the very ridicule which I despise! [*Exit.*

MUSIC. *Enter* DORICOURT, *meeting a* PILGRIM.

Dor. Ha! my Lord!—I thought you had been engaged in the House this important night.

Pilg. So I am—I slipt out as soon as Lord Trope got upon his legs; I can *badiner* here an hour or

two, and be back again before he is down. Here's a fine Figure from which I shall *not* run—

Enter LETITIA.

Charity, fair Lady! Charity for a poor Pilgrim!

Let. Charity! If you mean my prayers—heaven grant thee Wit, Pilgrim.

Pilg. Blessings I should ask from a *Devotee;*—but from you I ask the charities Beauty should bestow—soft looks, sweet words.

Let. Alas! I am bankrupt of these, and forced to turn beggar myself—

DORICOURT *advances.*

(*Aside.*—There he is! something striking must catch his Attention!)

Pilg. Do you beg too! Come, we'll proceed together then through the world—if you'll accept my hand?

Let. (*Aside*—Fortunate question!) I'll make you my Partner, not for Life, but through the soft mazes of a Minuet—Dare you dance?

Dor. Some Spirit in that!

Pilg. I dare any thing you command.

Dor. Do you know her, my Lord?

Pilg. No! Such a woman would formerly have been known in any disguise; but, Beauty is now common,—Venus seems to lend her *Cestus* through the whole sex!

They dance a Minuet.

Dor. (*Doricourt expresses Delight throughout.*) She dances divinely - - - charming!

The Minuet closes. [*Exit Letitia.*

Somebody must know her, let us enquire who she is! [*Exit.*

SAVILLE *advances with* KITTY WILLIS, *habited like* LADY FRANCES.

Sav. Though he endeavoured to keep himself concealed, I have discovered Courtall habited as Sir George.—Go and seat yourself in the Tea Room, and on no account discover your face. Remember too, Kitty, that the woman you are to personate—is a woman of Virtue.

Kitty. Such a part is sometimes, I suppose, not kept up in a Masquerade even by a woman of Character.

Sav. Of that *you* can be no judge!—Follow my directions, and you shall be rewarded. [*Exit Kitty.*

Enter DORICOURT, *hastily.*

Dor. Ha! Saville!—did you see a Lady dance just now?

Sav. No.

Dor. Very odd, I have enquired every where, nobody knows her!

Sav. Where is Miss Hardy?

Dor. Oh, I know nothing of her—cutting watch-papers, and making Conundrums, I suppose.

Sav. What do you mean?

Dor. Faith, I hardly know. Mrs. Rackett tells me she is not here—I asked no further!

Sav. Your Indifference seems encreased.

Dor. Quite the reverse; I have advanced thirty-two degrees towards Hatred!

Sav. You are jesting?

Dor. Then it must be with a very ill Grace my dear Saville, for I never was in a mood more serious. —Do you know the creature's almost an Ideot?

Sav. What!

Dor. An Ideot. To force Hardy to cancel the Engagement, I have some thoughts of feigning myself—downright mad.

Sav. I must leave you;—you are mysterious, and I cant stay to unravel you! I came here to watch over Innocence and Beauty.

Dor. At three and twenty, the Guardian of innocence and beauty! Is there not a cloven foot under that black gown, Saville?

Sav. No, faith. Courtall is here on a most detestable design. I have brought here, to personate the Lady, a Girl whose reputation cannot be hurt. You shall know the result to-morrow! Adieu!

[*Exit.*

Dor. (*Advancing forward, and musing.*) Yes, I think that will do! I actually will feign myself mad —fee the Doctor to pronounce me incurable—and when the parchments are destroyed—

(*As he stands, in a musing posture,* LETITIA *enters, and sings*)

SONG.

Wake! Thou son of Dullness, wake!
From thy drowsy Senses shake
All the Spells that Care employs
Cheating mortals of their Joys.

Light wing'd Spirits hither haste!
Who prepare for mortal taste
All the gifts that pleasure sends,
Every bliss that youth attends.

Touch his feelings, rouse his Soul,
Whilst the sparkling moments roll
Bid them teem with new Delight
Crown the Magic of the night!

Dor. Heaven!—the same sweet creature!

Let. You have chosen an unfit situation for Study! Fashion and Taste preside in this spot, they throw their Spells around you, a thousand Delights spring

up at their command;—and you, a Stoic! a being without Senses, are lost to all this in Reflection!

Dor. But you, the most charming of beings, awake me to Admiration! Did you come from the Stars!

Let. Yes, and shall re-ascend in a moment!

Dor. Pray, show me your face before you go.

Let. Why?

Dor. That I may fall in Love with it.

Let. Is there no honorable Engagement in the way

Dor. (*Aside*) Ah! There's the rub!

Let. She to whom you are devoted will be angry—but perhaps there is none.

Dor. Yes, yes—such a one!

Let. What! is she old?

Dor. No.

Let. Ugly?

Dor. No.

Let. What then?

Dor. Pho! dont talk about her—but shew me your face!

Let. My Vanity forbids;—'twould frighten you.

Dor. Impossible! Your Shape is graceful; your Air bewitching; your Face—your chin would tempt me to kiss it if I did not see, half mask'd, a pouting red lip above it that demands—

Let. You grow too free!

Dor. Your face then—only half a Glance!

Let. Not for Worlds!

Dor. What! you will have a little gentle force? (*attempts to seize her mask.*)

Let. I am gone for ever! [*Exit.*

Dor. 'Tis false. I'll follow you for ever. [*Exit.*

Music.

FLUTTER, LADY FRANCES, *and* SAVILLE *dressed as an Enchanter, advance.*

Lady F. How can you be thus interested for a Stranger?

Sav. Goodness interests because it *is* a Stranger; —its home is Heaven, on earth 'tis an assailed Wanderer. Imprudent Lady! why have you left the side of your proper protector? Where is your husband?

Flut. Why, what's that to him?

Lady F. It cannot be merely his Habit—There is something that awes me!

Flut. Pho! 'tis only his grey beard.—I know him; he keeps a Lottery Office on Cornhill!

Sav. My power as an Enchanter lays open every secret to me. Lady! there are Dangers abroad—beware! [*Exit.*

Lady F. I cannot account for it—but his manner has made me tremble! Let us seek Sir George.

Flut. He is coming towards us.

COURTALL *advances masked, and habited like* SIR GEORGE.

Court. (*Aside.*)—There she is! If I can but disengage her from that fool Flutter—crown me ye schemers with immortal wreaths!

Lady F. O my dear Sir George! I rejoice to meet you;—an old Conjuror has been alarming me by Prophecies. Where is Mrs. Rackett?

Court. (*Presses his Mask on his mouth*) In the outer Dancing room.—I promised to send you to her Mr. Flutter.

Flut. Oh she wants me to dance!—With all my heart. [*Exit.*

Lady F. Why do you keep on your mask?—'tis too warm.

Court. 'Tis very warm—I want air—let us go.

Lady F. You seem quite agitated. Shall we not bid our friends adieu?

Court. No, no; forms will be inconvenient now! I'll just give directions about the Carriage, and be

with you in a moment. (*going—steps back*) Put on your Mask, I have a particular reason for it.

[*Exit Courtall. Lady F. masks.*

SAVILLE *advances; with* KITTY *masked.*

Sav. Now Kitty, you know your Lesson. Lady Frances! (*takes off his Mask*) let me lead you to your Husband.

Lady F. Most unexpected! is Mr. Saville the Conjurer?—Sir George is just stepp'd to the door to give directions. We are going immediately—

Sav. You are deceived! See Sir George, unmasked, yonder.

Lady F. Good Heaven!—what means this?

Sav. Be not alarmed!—you have escaped the Snare. [*Exeunt Saville and Lady Frances.*

Enter COURTALL, *and seizes* KITTY'S *hand.*

Court. Now! come—my Angel! (*hurries out with her on the other side.*)

MUSIC.

DORICOURT *follows* LETITIA *backwards and forwards through the Crowd. They come forward.*

Dor. I never was charmed till now! English Beauty—french Vivacity, Wit, Elegance. Your name, my Angel! though you persist in concealing your face—tell me your name!

Let. My name has a powerful Spell in it!

Dor. You are all Charm!

Let. But, my name revealed—the Charm is broke.

Dor. I'll answer for its undiminished force.

Let. Suppose it Harriet, or Charlotte, or Maria—or—

Dor. Away with Harriet, and Charlotte, and Maria—the name you inherit from your father?

Let. Oh, that's of no worth;—'tis so transient!

Dor. Why must it be transient?

Let. After Marriage, only, I would have it unchangeable.

Dor. Marriage! Oh—its Chains are too heavy and vulgar for such a spirit as your's.—The Flowery Wreaths of Cupid are the only bands you should wear.

Let. They may be the lightest;—but, 'tis possible to wear those of Marriage with Ease, throw them gracefully round, and twist them in a True-Lovers' knot for the Bosom.

Dor. You are an Angel! But, what will you be when a Wife?

Let. But a woman. If my husband should prove a Churl, a Gamester, a Coxcomb, or a Tyrant, I'll squander his Fortune, treat him with neglect, break his heart—and return the sneer of the world with scorn, whilst my Feelings prey upon my Life!

Dor. What spirit—what Animation! But—your conduct if he be worthy of your love?

Let. Why then, I would be any thing—or all; Grave, Gay, Capricious,—the soul of Whim, the spirit of Variety. Live with him in the eye of Fashion, or in the shade of Retirement. Change my country, my sex. Feast with him in an Esquimaux hut, or in a Persian pavilion. Join him in the victorious War-dance on the borders of Lake Ontario, or sleep to the soft breathings of the flute in the Cinnamon Groves of Ceylon. Dig with him in the Mines of Golconda, or enter the dangerous precincts of the gorgeous Palace of the Mogul, cheat him of his wishes—and overturn his empire! to restore the Husband of my heart to the blessings of Liberty and Love!

Dor. Delightful wildness! Oh, that I could catch and cage thee for ever! (*attempting to clasp her.*)

Let. Hold, Sir! Though Cupid may tempt to the snare, 'tis Hymen must draw the Net to catch me.

Dor. In vain you assume airs of coldnesss—Fate has ordained you mine!

Let. How do you know?

Dor. I feel it in my Heart. I never met with a woman so perfectly to my fancy; I wont believe it formed you so only to tantalize me.

Let. (*Aside.*) This moment is worth a whole existence!

Dor. Come, shew me your face—and confirm your empire!

Let. Tomorrow you shall be satisfied.

Dor. Tomorrow! Oh, let it be now!

Let. No.

Dor. Where then shall I see you tomorrow?—When?

Let. You shall see me in an hour when you least expect me!

Dor. Why all this Mystery?

Let. I chuse to be mysterious. At present, be content to know that I am a woman of Family and Fortune.—Farewell!

HARDY *comes through the crowd, and advances a little.*

Har. (*Aside.*) Farewell!—Then I am come at the fag end.

Dor. Let me see you to your Carriage.

Let. As you value knowing who I am, stir not a step. If I am followed, you see me no more! [*Exit.*

Dor. Barbarous creature—she's gone!—What, and is this really serious—am I in Love!—Pho! it cant be. Oh, Flutter—this is lucky—I want you—do you know that charming creature?

Enter FLUTTER.

Flut. What charming creature? I pass'd a thousand.

Dor. She went out at that door, as you entered.

Flut. Oh, yes;—I know her very well—I know every body.

Dor. Do you, my dear fellow? Who is she?

Flut. Oh, Lord George Jennett has intruded the creature in disguise—she is kept by him.

Har. (*Aside*) Impudent Scoundrel!

Dor. Kept!

Flut. Yes; Colonel Gorget had her first—then—I forget exactly to how many she sunk;—at last, she's Lord George's. (*Talks to other Masks.*)

Dor. I'll murder Gorget, poison Lord George, and shoot myself!

Har. (*comes forward*) I foresee I have hit the time to clear up the whole.—Mr. Doricourt—I say—Flutter as usual has misled—I can tell you correctly whom you are in Love with.

Dor. A strange *rencontre!*—Who?

Har. Why, my Letty!

Dor. I understand the Rebuke, Sir;—'tis however too soon to assume the Father-in-law.

Har. Whu! what do you mean by that? I tell you that the Lady you admire—is Letitia Hardy.

Dor. I am glad *you* are so well satisfied with the state of my heart.—I wish *I* was! [*Exit.*

Har. Stop a moment—stop I say!—You wont! very well, I'll trick you for this; I'll join Letty's plot, hang me if I dont. There's something in my head shall tingle in your heart!—He shall have a lesson on impatience, which I predict he'll be the better for as long as he lives! [*Exit.*

SAVILLE *comes forward, with other Masks.*

Sav. Flutter, you love Variety, come with us; we are going to Courtall's to raise—a Laugh at Vice!—Come along, I'll explain as we go.

Flut. With all my heart—"Live to think" was my father's Motto:—"Live to laugh" is mine!

[*Exeunt, with two or three others.*

SCENE II.

COURTALL'S. *Enter* KITTY *and* COURTALL, *masked.*

Kitty. Where have you brought me Sir George? this is not my home!

Court. Beautiful Lady Frances! (*kneels and unmasks*)—'tis my home. Oh, forgive the ardent Passion which has compelled me to deceive you.

Kitty. Oh! Mr. Courtall—what will become of my Character!

Court. Say but that you pardon the wretch who adores you! Did you but know the agonizing tortures of my heart since I have had the felicity of conversing with you this morning—or the despair that now— [*a knock.*

Kitty. Oh! I am undone!

Court. Confusion!—my dear Lady Frances! I'm not at home—Rascal! do you hear? Let nobody in; I am not at home!

Serv. (*Without*) Sir, I told the Gentlemen so!

Court. Some Spirit thwarts me!—They are coming up—step adorable creature into this room one moment!—I'll throw them out of the window, if they stay three.

[*Exit Kitty through a door at the back of the stage.*

Enter SAVILLE, FLUTTER, *and other Masks.*

Flut. Oh, Gemini?—beg the petticoat's pardon—just saw a corner of it!

1*st Mask.* No wonder you was denied. I thought you took us for Bailiffs!

Court. Upon my Veracity I am inexpressibly glad to see you Gentlemen—but, you perceive how I am circumstanced—excuse me at this moment.

Flut. Tell us who it is then?

Court. Oh, fie!

Flut. Come, we wont blab.

Court. I cant, upon honour.—Thus far—She's a woman of the first character and rank! Saville (*takes him aside*) have I influence, or have I not!

Sav. Why, surely, you dont insinuate—

Court. No, not insinuate, but swear, that she's now closeted! by Cupid, I dont deceive you. There's Generalship! you Rogue. Such an humble, distant, sighing fellow as thou art, at the end of a six months siege, would have *boasted* of a kiss on her glove.—I only give the signal and—pop! she is with me.

Sav. What, Lady Fran—

Court. Hush!! You shall see her name, on some other occasion, in red letters at the end of my list. Gentlemen, you must excuse me now.—But—

Sav. (*With an air of Mystery*) Oh, we must go, out of respect to the Lady:—'tis a person of Rank!

Flut. Then I'll have a peep at her—(*runs to the door.*)

Court. This is too much, Sir.

(*Trying to prevent him.*)

1*st Mask.* By Jupiter—we'll all have a peep!

Court. Gentlemen! consider—for Character sake—a Lady of Quality—the Earl her father—the consequences between me and her husband—How can you make amends?

Flut. Why, you'll have your throat cut—but I'll write your Elegy!—So, now for the door! (*whilst part hold Courtall, the rest open the door*) Beg your Ladyship's pardon. Whoever you are—(*Leads her out*) emerge from darkness, and, like the glorious Sun, dissipate obscurity by your charms (*takes off her mask.*)

Sav. Kitty Willis!—ha! ha! ha!

All. Ha! ha! ha! Kitty Willis! ha! ha! ha! Kitty Willis! Kitty Willis!

1st Mask. Why, what a fellow you are Courtall, to attempt imposing on your *Friends* in this manner! —ha! ha! ha! A Lady of Quality—an Earl's Daughter—ha! ha! ha!—Your Ladyship's most obedient!

Sav. Courtall (*calls him aside—pretending to whisper*) have you Influence, or have you not?

Flut. The man's moon-struck!

Court. The Furies seize you all together!

Kitty. What! me too Mr. Courtall? me, whom you have knelt to, prayed to, and adored! (*runs round the stage after him.*)

Flut. That's right, Kitty; give him a little more!

Sav. (*to Kitty*)—You may now depart.

[*Exit Kitty.*

Court. Disappointed—laughed at—

Sav.—And despised! I have fulfilled my Design, which was—to expose Presumption and Profligacy with all their blandishments to Laughter and Contempt! Adieu Sir;—pause before you again boast of influence with women of Rank. When you next flatter yourself with hopes of success in Vice—look not to the virtuous and the Noble! [*Exit.*

Flut. And Courtall—d'ye hear! before you closet a Lady again—look under her mask!

[*Exit with the other Masks all laughing.*

Court. There's no bearing this! Tarnished in Character I cannot remain here—I'm off for Paris!

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I. HARDY'S.

Enter HARDY, *and* MRS. RACKETT.

Mrs. R. Oh! in what a whimsical situation is poor Doricourt! Dying for her, and hates her; believes her a Fool—and a woman of Brilliant Understanding!

Har. Do you know, out of downright goodnature, at the Masquerade I went up to him to explain matters; but my Gentleman whips round upon his heel, and snapt me as short—as if he had been Overseer of the Poor, and I—an old Woman with six small children! You are sure of me now in all your plots.

Mrs. R. Here comes the Wonder-worker,

Enter LETITIA.

here comes The Enchantress of the Masquerade—who can sing and dance a man out of his Wits! But pray, have we Morning masquerades?

Let. Oh no—but I am so enamoured of this all-conquering Dress, that I could not resist putting it on the moment I had breakfasted. I shall wear it on the day I am married, and then lay it by in spices, like the miraculous robes of St. Bridget.

Har. Aye, Letty, the attractions that help to catch

a husband are laid by, one after another, till the Lady grows—a downright Wife; and then—as I always foresee—she runs crying to her Mother, because she has transformed her Lover into a downright Husband.—As for Doricourt, Plots against him so quickly drove one another out of my head all night, that, giddy as a Goose—I could make nothing of them in the morning. Cousin Racket, do contrive something.

Mrs. R. I have—I have it! You shant undeceive him Letitia, until he is your Husband! Marry him under the impressions he has of Miss Hardy—and when you are his Wife—

Let. Oh!—I see the whole—'tis an enchanting scheme!

Har. But—but I foresee the End of it—it will not succeed;—you know the Wedding is not to take place this week or more—and my Letty will never be able to play the fool so long.

Mrs. R. Oh, the knot shall be tied to day! I have it all in my brain. Feign yourself seriously ill (*to Hardy*), send for Doricourt, and tell him you cant go out of the world in peace, unless you first see the ceremony performed.

Har. I feign myself quitting the World from a serious illness—I could as soon feign myself a retiring Minister! Why, as I never called in a Doctor, I never had an illness in my life that went beyond a *Cold!*

Mrs. R. Oh, it is not of you that I have fears! But, what says Letitia? are you willing to make the irrevocable vow, to day?

Let. Oh—I—I—'tis so exceedingly sudden, that really—

Mrs. R. That really you are frighten'd out of your wits—lest it should be impossible to contrive it. But, I'll manage it.—Come, put off your conquering Dress, and recover all your awkward airs. Go (*to Mr.*

Hardy) to bed directly! Your room shall be crammed with Phials, and all the other Apparatus of Death.

Har. Well by and by! (*looks at his Watch*) The Budget's to be opened this evening—I must first just step down to the House.

Mrs. R. What, Sir! wont your attendance be excused by a mortal sickness!

Har. Why, I believe Cousin Rackett there are rogues who, on that plea, would willingly excuse many of us, with a view to the health of the Nation. But—

Mrs. R. But—you must not stir out, Sir; stay and practise a few *Groans*—and I'll answer for the plot.

Let. Married in jest! the idea is most extraordinary—But, the Spirit of Venture is on me!

[*Exit, with Mrs. Rackett.*

Har. In truth, I'd rather go any where, out of the way of this Scheme;—I'm half afraid! I foresee some Ill happening from this making believe to die before one's time.—But, hang it - - - a-hem! I'm a stout man yet; only Fifty-six.—And what's that? in the last Yearly Bill there were three lived to above an hundred. Fifty-six!—Whu!—that's not Old-age now! [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

DORICOURT'S. DORICOURT *in his Robe de Chambre.*

Enter SAVILLE.

Sav. Undressed so late?

Dor. I went to bed late—I was not able to sleep—'twas late when I rose—Do you know Lord George Jennett?

Sav. Yes.

Dor. Has he a Mistress?

Sav. Yes.

Dor. What sort of a creature is she?

Sav. Why, she spends him Three Thousand a year with the Ease of a Duchess, and entertains his friends with the air of a *Ninon*—ergo, she is handsome, lively, and impudent. (*Doricourt stamps and walks about disordered*)—In the name of Caprice, what ails you?

Dor. You have hit it—*elle est mon Caprice;* the Mistress of Lord George—insufferable!

Sav. What, you saw her at the Masquerade?

Dor. *Saw* her!—*loved* her, was *dying* for her, without knowing who she was. And now—torture!—I cannot hate her.

Sav. Ridiculous enough! all this distress about a Kept Woman, who will sink to any one, I dare swear, in a fortnight.

Dor. The sentiment I have conceived for the witch is so unaccountable, that this is the very idea which I cannot endure. Was she a Woman of Honour, as a Wife I could adore her—but, I really believe, if she were to send me an assignation, I should hate her.

Sav. Hey-dey! This sounds like Love! What is to become, pray, of poor Miss Hardy?

Dor. Her name gives me an Ague! Dear Saville, how shall I contrive to make old Hardy cancel the engagement! The moiety of the estate which she will forfeit shall be her's the next moment, by deed of gift.

Sav. Let me see—Cant you get it insinuated that you are a wild fellow, attached to Gaming, and so forth?

Dor. Oh, such a Character might have disgusted, three Centuries back. But, what timorous being will it frighten now? I positively must pursue my scheme of feigned Madness at last—there, will that do for a Grin?

Sav. Ridiculous!—But, how are you certain that

the woman who so bewilders you is but the creature of Lord George?

Dor. Flutter told me so.

Sav. Fifty to One against the intelligence, of course.

Dor. It must be true;—there was a strange Mystery about her, for which nothing else can account —(*a violent rap*)—Who can this be?

(SAVILLE *looks out.*)

Sav. The Proverb is your answer—'tis Flutter himself. Tip him a scene of the Madman—to see how it takes!

Dor. I will;—a good way to send it about Town. Shall it be of the melancholy kind—or the raving?

Sav. Oh! let it be Rant!—downright Rant!—he comes.

Dor. Talk not to me—who can pull Comets by the Beard, and overset an Island!—

Enter FLUTTER.

There! This is he!—this is he, who hath sent my poor soul, without Coat or Waistcoat, to be tossed about in Æther like a duck-feather!—Villain—give me my Soul again!

Flut. Upon my soul I have'nt got it.

(*Exceedingly frightened.*)

Sav. Oh! Mr. Flutter, what a melancholy sight!—I little thought to have seen my poor friend reduced to this.

Flut. Mercy defend me! What's he mad?

Sav. You see how it is. An abandoned Italian Lady—Jealousy—gave him a drug—and every full of the Moon—

Dor. Moon! Who dares talk of the Moon? the patroness of Genius—the rectifier of Wits—the—Ah! here she is!—I feel her—she tugs at my Brain—she has it—she has it—she runs away with it—

[*Exit.*

Flut. This is dreadful! exceedingly dreadful I protest. Have you had the mad Doctor?

Sav. Not yet. The worthy Miss Hardy—what a Misfortune!

Flut. Aye very true.——Do they know it?

Sav. Oh, no; the Paroxysm seized him but this morning.

Flut. Adieu—I must go and tell!—I can't stay. (*going hastily.*)

Sav. But you must (*holding him*) stay and assist me; perhaps he'll return again in a moment, and, when he is in this way, his Strength is prodigious!

Flut. Can't indeed—can't upon my soul—can't. (*In great haste.*)

Sav. Flutter!—Dont mistake now;—remember, 'tis Doricourt that's mad.

Flut. (*turning back*) Yes—you mad.

Sav. No, no;—Doricourt.

Flut. That I may be quite sure I make no mistake —I'll say you're both mad! [*Exeunt, severally.*

SCENE III.

SIR GEORGE TOUCHWOOD'S.

Enter Sir George, *and Lady* Frances.

Sir Geo. The delinquent is escaped—Courtall is gone to France.

Lady F. What! is it possible that you have been to seek him?

Sir Geo. It was impossible to avoid it.

Lady F. I should have been too much afraid of Consequences ever to have told you his name—how did you learn it?

Sir Geo. Oh, in the first Coffee-Room I entered. —Every body is full of the story.

Lady F. Thank Heaven he's gone! Let us give

our minds to a pleasanter subject.—The Hardy family are forming a plot against your friend Doricourt, and we are expected in the evening to assist.

Sir Geo. With all my heart, my Angel; but I cant stay to hear it explained. They told me Mr. Saville would be at home in half an hour, I am impatient to see him. The adventure of last night—

Lady F. Think of it only with Gratitude; the danger I was in has overset a new System of conduct that, perhaps, I was too much inclined to adopt. But henceforth, my dear Sir George, you shall be my constant companion and Guard. And, when they ridicule the unfashionable creatures, the felicity of our hearts will have rendered them impenetrable by their Satire.

Sir Geo. Charming Angel! you almost reconcile me to Courtall. Hark! here is Company (*goes to the door*) 'tis your lively Widow—I'll away to Saville. [*Exit.*

Enter Mrs. RACKETT.

Mrs. R. Oh, Lady Frances! I am shocked to death. Have you received a Card from us?

Lady F. Yes; within this half hour.

Mrs. R. Aye, 'tis of no consequence.—'Tis all over—Doricourt is mad!

Lady F. Mad!

Mrs. R. My poor Letitia! Just as we were enjoying ourselves in the prospect of a Scheme that was planned for their mutual happiness, in came Flutter, breathless with the Intelligence. I flew hither to know whether you had heard it.

Lady F. No—indeed—and I hope it is one of Mr. Flutter's dreams—

Enter SAVILLE.

Oh! we shall be informed. Mr. Saville, I rejoice to

see you ; Sir George will be disappointed, he is gone to your Lodgings.

Sav. I should have been happy to have prevented Sir George. I hope your Ladyship's adventure last night did not disturb your dreams?

Lady F. No Dreams were disturbed, for the thoughts of my escape, and of my obligations to you, prevented my sleeping a moment. But, we have just had shocking intelligence—Is it true that Doricourt is mad?

Sav. (*Aside.* So! the business is done!)—I have just been a witness of his furious ravings!

Mrs. R. Flutter told us the whole history. Some Italian Princess gave him a drug, in a box of sweetmeats sent to him by her own page; and it renders him Lunatic exactly one week every month. Poor Miss Hardy! I never felt so much on any occasion in my life.

Sav. As a great Secret, I will inform you Madam that she is less to be pitied on account of this malady than you imagine—Doricourt did not love Miss Hardy.

Mrs. R. He did love Miss Hardy, Sir, and would have been the happiest of men.

Sav. Pardon me, Madam, his heart was not only free from that Lady's chains, but absolutely captivated by another; but—if you know better than he does—

Mrs. R. Why I do know better than he does, Sir;—it was Miss Hardy herself who captivated him at the Masquerade—she charmed him in disguise. He professed the most violent passion for her; and a plan was laid, this evening to cheat him into happiness—by marrying him to the unrecognized object of his Love.

Sav. Ha!—ha! excellent!—most exhilarating News! Why then, though I have not eaten of the Italian Princess's box of sweetmeats, sent by her own Page, I am quite as mad as Doricourt is!

Mrs. R. So it appears.—What can all this mean?

Sav. Why that he has never been out of his perfect senses; though he will lose them through Joy when I tell him what I have learnt. Why, the madness was only a Feint, to avoid marrying Miss Hardy, ha! ha!—I'll carry the intelligence instantly. (*going.*)

Mrs. R. In the name of Revenge—no!—revenge for what he has made us suffer. Divulge not a Syllable! when he is summoned to Mr. Hardy, prevail upon him to come—Madness and all!

Lady F. Pray do. Now I am in the Secret, I should like to see him shewing off!

Sav. Why 'tis inhuman to conceal his happiness. Yet, let me consider, his Joy will eventually be the greater;—besides, the Plot and Counterplot will hasten the Catastrophe—

Mrs. R. The what!

Sav. The—will hasten the Marriage! [*Bows.*

Mrs. R. Beware! I know with marriage you are out of humour now; to break your heart for which I may perhaps, some six years hence, have you myself.

Sav. Well then, if ever I should be tired of Life—but, dont make love to me foolish Hussey; but set me down as you go, and tell me, by the way, your whole scheme against Doricourt. (*Leading her out.*)

Mrs. R. You wont fail us?

[*Exeunt Saville and Mrs. Racket.*

Lady F. No. Depend on us. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

SCENE IV.

AN APARTMENT AT DORICOURT'S.

DORICOURT *seated, reading.*

Dor. (*flings away the book.*) What effect can the Advice of Fourscore have on a youthful mind agitated by Passion! (*Musing*)—Can it then be possible for such a soul as her's to support itself in a situation so humiliating?—a kept Woman! (*rising.*)

Enter SAVILLE.

Sav. What a happy dog you are, Doricourt! I might have been mad, have beggar'd, or pistol'd myself, without its being mentioned—But you forsooth! the whole female World is concerned for. I reported the state of your brain to five different women:—the lip of the first trembled; the white bosom of the second heaved a Sigh; the third blessed—herself; the fourth, whilst she pinned a curl, said—"Well, now, perhaps, he'll be a lively companion, his insipidity was intolerable;"—and the fifth? why the eyes of the fifth dropped—upon her pocket glass.

Dor. Envy! sheer Envy by the smiles of Hebe! There are not less than forty pair of the brightest eyes in Town will drop crystals when their owners hear of my supposed misfortune.

Sav. Well, but I have News for you:—Poor Hardy is confined to his bed; they *say* he is going out of the World, and that he wants to settle whether you are to have his Daughter, before he goes.

Dor. Ill?—so ill! I am really sorry for it. He is a worthy little fellow—if he had not the gift of foreseeing so confoundedly.

Sav. Well, you must go and take leave.

Dor. What! act the Lunatic in a dying man's chamber.

Sav. You will thus attain your object, for his last commands you may suppose will be, that you are not to marry his Daughter!

Dor. Why that's true, and tempts me—and yet—impose upon a poor fellow at so serious a moment—I cant do it.

Sav. I am answerable for your appearance, though it should be in a strait waistcoat. I assure you he is *acquainted* with the state of your mind, and is the more anxious to see you!

Dor. I dont like encountering Rackett;—she's an arch little devil, and will discover the cheat.

Sav. There's a fellow!—Escaped ninety-nine women, and afraid of the hundredth.

Dor. And with reason—that hundredth is a Widow!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

HARDY'S.

Enter Mrs. RACKETT *and Miss* OGLE.

Miss Ogle. And so Miss Hardy is to be married immediately?

Mrs. R. If Fate does not thwart her. You are apprised of the scheme.

Miss Ogle. (*Aside.*—The Plague! she is six years younger than I am.) Mr. Doricourt is handsome.

Mrs. R. Handsome, rich, and generous! There's a husband—Isn't he worth pulling caps for?

Miss Ogle. (*Aside.* In my conscience the widow speaks as though, after the loss of her cap, he might have her ear.) I wonder you did'nt try for this Wonder, Mrs. Rackett.

Mrs. R. Really, Miss Ogle, I had not time. Be-

sides, when I marry, so many fellows will hang themselves that, to prevent so much mischief, I shall postpone it for a few years. (*Aside.* This will cost her a new lace—I heard it crack!)

Enter Sir GEORGE *and Lady* FRANCES.

Sir Geo. Well, here we are. But where is the Knight of the fierce countenance?

Enter FLUTTER.

Flut. Here he comes! Here he comes! I ran up as fast as I could as soon as I saw him alight from his Carriage!

Lady F. Then Miss Hardy's fate is at its Crisis. —She plays a hazardous game, and I tremble for her.

Sav. (*Without*) Come, let me guide you; this way my poor friend! Why are you so furious?

Dor. (*Without.*) The house of Death—to the house of Death—

Enter DORICOURT *and* SAVILLE.

Ah! 'tis the very spot!

Lady F. How wild, and fiery, he looks!

Mrs. R. Now, I think, he looks terrified at us.

Flut. Poor creature!—how his eyes work!

Mrs. R. I never saw a Madman before.—Let me examine him—will he bite?

Sav. Pray, keep out of his reach Ladies—You dont know your danger. He's like a Wild Cat if a sudden fancy seizes him.

Sir Geo. You talk like a *Keeper* of wild-creatures. —How much do you demand for showing the Monster?

Dor. (*Apart.*—I dont like this—I must arouse their Sensibility!) There! there she darts through the air in liquid flames!—Down again!—oh—oh!

—now I have her. Ah! she burns, she scorches! she eats into my very heart!

All. Ha! ha! ha!

Mrs. R. 'Tis the apparition of the wicked Italian Princess!

Flut. Keep her Highness fast, Doricourt.

Miss Ogle. Give her a pinch, before you let her go.

Dor. I am laughed at!

Mrs. R. Laughed at—to be sure;—you cant escape. Why I could play the Madman better than you.—"There! there she darts—Now I have her!"—ha! ha! ha! (*Aside.* I must go and learn whether Mr. Hardy is ready.) [*Exit.*

Dor. I knew that Widow would discover me. I am overpowered by Confusion—I'll leave the house! (*Going.*)

Sir Geo. Stay Sir—You must not go. Doricourt! 'twas poorly done, to affect Madness rather than fulfil your engagements.

Dor. Affect!—Saville, what can I do?

Sav. Why—since you're discovered—like other rogues—confess.

Miss Ogle. Aye, plead guilty, and pray for Mercy.

Dor. Well—I avow the Scheme! I cannot love Miss Hardy, and I never—

Sav. Hold my dear Doricourt, be not rash! What will the World say to such—

Dor. What care I for the World!—The World wont care for my loss of Peace! Must I, to please the world, sacrifice my Happiness?

Sir Geo. Yes, every thing—rather than be branded with Dishonour.

Lady F. Though our arguments should fail, there is a pleader whom you surely cannot resist—Mr. Hardy who you have heard is dying, supplicates you not to forsake his child!

All. The dying Mr. Hardy!

Enter Mrs. RACKETT.

Mrs. R. The dying Mr. Hardy requests you to grant him a moment's interview Mr. Doricourt! Let me conduct you to his room.

Dor. Oh, aye, any where, to the Antipodes—I care not what becomes of me!

[*Ex.* DORICOURT, *Mrs.* RACKETT, *and Miss* OGLE.

Sir Geo. How Mortification proves itself a specific against Stubbornness!

Flut. Ladies, Ladies, have the charity to take me with you, that I may make no blunder! [*Exit.*

Lady F. Sir George, you dont know Mr. Saville. [*Exit.*

Sir Geo. A thousand pardons—but I will not pardon *myself* for not observing you. I have been at your door twice to day.

Sav. I am concerned that you had so much trouble Sir George.

Sir Geo. Trouble! what a word from you who have preserved Lady Frances!—And yet—you have wrested from me my dearest privilege. Start not, Sir George, to protect Lady Frances was *my* Right.

Sav. I hardly know how to answer such a reproach.

Sir Geo. There is but one method by which my feelings can be satisfied—I cannot endure that my wife should be so indebted to any man who is less than my Brother.

Sav. Explain yourself.

Sir Geo. I have a Sister, Saville, who is amiable—I shall give her a commission to steal your Heart, out of revenge for what you have done.

Sav. I am infinitely honoured, Sir George, but—

Sir Geo. I will not listen to a Sentence which begins with so unpromising a word. You must go with us into Hampshire. I know no one to whose Heart I would so readily commit the care of my Sister's happiness.

Sav. I will attend you with pleasure, provided it

is not on your scheme of Retirement. Society has Claims on Lady Frances.

Sir Geo. Claims Saville!

Sav. Yes, Claims. Lady Frances was born to be the ornament of Courts. She is sufficiently alarmed, by the danger through which I fortunately watched her, not to wander in future beyond the reach of her natural protector. And, from the British Court, the most tenderly anxious Husband could not wish to banish his Wife. Let her keep in her eye the bright Example who presides there; the splendor of whose Rank yields to the superior lustre of her Virtue!

Sir Geo. I am conquered by your argument.—But, here they come—all intelligence!

Enter Mrs. RACKETT, *Lady* FRANCES, *Miss* OGLE, *and* FLUTTER.

Mrs. R. Oh! what a Scene! do you know—

Flut. Let me tell the Story;—As soon as Doricourt—

Mrs. R. I protest you shan't!—Said Mr. Hardy—

Flut. No—'twas Doricourt spoke first—Says he—No, 'twas the Parson—Says he—

Mrs. R. Stop his mouth Sir George—he'll spoil the story of course.

Sir Geo. Never heed Circumstances—the Result—the Result.

Mrs. R. No, no; you shall have it in Form.—Mr. Hardy performed the sick man like an Angel.—He sat up in bed, and talked so pathetically, that the tears stood in Doricourt's eyes.

Flut. Aye, stood—they did not drop, but stood—in future I shall be very exact. 'Twas a good moment, the Parson seized it—such opportunities you know they never miss.

Mrs. R. Make haste! said Doricourt—if you leave me time to reflect, poor Hardy may die unhappy.

Flut. When we slipt out of the room, they were proceeding with the Marriage surprisingly.

Sir Geo. Then, by this time, they have reached "Amazement," which every body knows is the end of the ceremony of Matrimony.

Mrs. R. Aye, the framers of the Ceremony closed with that word, as a hint to the Bride of the Amazement which awaits her, on finding the Lover lost in the Husband—

Sir Geo. Because she has perhaps, brisk Widow, remitted after Marriage some of those skilful attractions by which she enchanted before.

Lady F. Here the Bridegroom comes!

Enter DORICOURT, *with folded arms and melancholy air.*

[*Exit Saville.*

All. Joy! joy! joy!

Miss Ogle. If *he* is a sample of Bridegrooms, keep me single!—A younger brother, from the funeral of his father, could not carry a more distressed countenance.

Flut. Oh!—Now, I suppose, he's melancholy mad.

Lady F. You do not consider the Importance of the occasion!

Sir Geo. Nor, how shocking it is for a man to be forced into marriage with one woman, whilst his heart is devoted to another.

Mrs. R. Well Mr. Doricourt! now 'tis over, I confess 'twas a most ridiculous piece of Quixotism to give up the happiness of a whole life, to please a man who perhaps has but a few moments to be sensible of the sacrifice.

Flut. So it appeared to me. But, thought I, Mr. Doricourt has studied man in different climates—he knows best.

Dor. Desperation!—Did ye not all set upon me? Didn't ye talk of Honour—Compassion—Justice?

Sir Geo. Very true—and, as you have acted according to their dictates, I believe the utmost felicity of the Marriage State will reward you!

Dor. Never, Sir George! To Felicity I bid adieu—but, I will endeavour to be content. Where is my—I must speak it, where is my—Wife?

Enter LETITIA, *masked. Led by* SAVILLE.

Sav. Mr. Doricourt, this Lady was pressing to be introduced to you.

Dor. Ah!—(*starting.*)

Let. I told you, last night, you should see me at a time when you least expected me—I keep my promise!

Sir Geo. Whoever you are, Madam, you could not have arrived at a happier moment—Mr. Doricourt is just married.

Let. Married! but a few hours since, he swore eternal love to me! I believed him, gave him a heart in which no other man had ever obtained an interest—and now—

Dor. In which no other ever had an Interest! Lady, my fate yet wants that torture! Nothing but the conviction that such was not your state could have made me think one moment of my present marriage. This visit is as barbarous as unexpected—for it is now my Duty to forget you; which, spite of your degraded Situation, I shall find but too difficult!

Let. My —— what situation? (*Aside.* What can he mean!)

Dor. I must apologize for such an explanation here—but, I am not ignorant—it is the only circumstance that can give me peace—that you are the Companion of Lord George Jennett.

Let. Ridiculous pretence! No, Sir, know that my Name, my Heart, my Honour are unspotted—as her's you have married; my Birth and Fortune equal

to your own.—I might have been your's—But, Sir, farewell! (*Going.*)

Dor. Oh! stay a moment—(*runs and seizes Flutter by the Collar.*) Rascal! is she not—

Flut. Who, she? Oh dear no—'Twas quite a different person that I meant. I dont know that I ever before saw that Lady.

Dor. And never shalt thou see her more.

(*Shakes him most violently.*)

Mrs. R. Have mercy upon the poor man—he'll murder him!

Dor. Murder him! Yes, you, myself, and all mankind. Sir George—Saville—*you* have thus thrust me on the precipice—you have driven me from Joy, Felicity, and Life.

Mrs. R. There! Now how well he acts the Madman!—This is something like! I knew he would do it well enough, when the proper time came.

Dor. Hard-hearted Woman! enjoy my Ruin—riot in my wretchedness—

HARDY *bursts in.*

Har. This is too much! How dare you, the husband of my Daughter, show all this passion for this Woman?

Dor. Alive!

Har. Alive? aye, and merry! Here, wipe off the flour from my face—never in better health, or in higher Spirits, in my life. Why, my illness was only a fetch—which I foresaw would make you marry my Letty.

Dor. Cruel and ungenerous! Well Sir, you are gratified; the possession of my Heart was no object either with you or your daughter—my Fortune, and Name, were all you desired, and these—I leave My native England I shall quit, nor ever behold you more. But, Lady! that—in my exile—I

may have one consolation, grant me the favour you last night denied;—let me behold all that mask conceals, that your Image may be fully impressed upon my heart, and chear my distant solitary hours.

Let. ---This is the most awful moment of my Life! (*She turns aside in great Agitation.*)---Oh Doricourt! The slight act of taking off my Mask, makes me the most blest—or the most miserable of Women!

Dor. What can this mean? Reveal your Face, I conjure you.

Let. (*unmasks*)—Behold it!

Dor. Rapture! Transport! Heaven!

Mrs. R. Now for a touch of the *happy* Madman! —This scheme was mine.

Let. I will not allow that. This Stratagem originated from my disappointment in not having made the impression on you I wished. The timidity of the english character threw over me a veil which you did not penetrate. You have forced me to emerge, in some degree, from my natural reserve, and throw aside the veil that hid me.

Dor. My spirits are still in a delirium of pleasure —I cannot answer you.—Speak on sweet Angel!

Let. You see I *can* be any thing; chuse then my character—your taste shall fix it. Shall I be an *English* wife?—or, breaking from the bonds of Nature and Education, step forth to the world in all the striking glare of foreign manners?

Dor. Nothing can be captivating that you are not; you shall be nothing but—yourself. Your penetration discovered that you won not my Heart at the first interview; but, you now have my whole Soul— your person, your face, your Mind, I would not exchange for those of any other woman breathing.

Har. The Rogue! how well he makes up for past slights!

Let. Congratulate me, my dear friends, can you conceive my Happiness?

Flut. No, congratulate me, that I have escaped with Life; and give me some sticking plaister—this wild-cat has torn the skin from my throat.

Sir Geo. I expect to be amongst the first who are congratulated—for, whilst Doricourt has gained one Enchantress—I have preserved another.

Har. I say I'll be congratulated first, for I am the happiest! Cousin Rackett, I wish you a good Husband with all my heart. Mr. Flutter, I'll believe every word you say—this fortnight. The long train of Felicity, which I foresee, inspires me——I never was so merry in all my life—Whu! I believe I can dance! (*footing.*)

Dor. Charming, charming creature! It was a strange perversion of Taste that led me to consider delicate Timidity as proof of an uninformed Mind and inelegant Manners! I now feel that it is to that innate Modesty, English Husbands owe a felicity—the married men of other nations are strangers to. It is a protecting Veil to your charms; it is the surest bulwark of your husband's honour—may the hour never arrive, in which *British* Ladies shall sacrifice to foreign Glare—the Grace of Modesty!

EPILOGUE.

Nay, cease, and hear me!—I am come to ask
Why pleased at conquest gain'd behind a Mask!
Is't strange? Why, pray what Lady Bab, or Grace,
E'er won a Lover—in her *natural* face?
Mistake me not! French red and blanching creams
I stoop not to—for these are hackneyed themes;
The Arts I mean are harder to detect,
Easier put on, displayed to more effect.

Do Pride or Envy by their horrid lines
Destroy th' effect of nature's sweet designs?
The Mask of Softness is at once applied,
And gentlest Manners decorate the Bride!

Does Heart in Love inspire the Vestal's eye,
Or point the glance, or prompt the struggling sigh?
Not Dian's brows more rigid frowns disclose,
And timid hues appear, where passion glows.

And you, my gentle Sirs, wear Vizors too,
But I'll unmask you, and expose to view
Your hidden features.—First I point at you!
That well-stuff'd waistcoat, and that ruddy cheek,
That ample forehead, and that skin so sleek,
Point out Goodnature and a generous Heart—
Tyrant! stand forth, and, conscious, own thy part,
Thy Wife, thy Children, tremble in thy eye,
And Peace is banished—when the Father's nigh!

Sure 'tis Enchantment! See, on every side
Your Masks fall off!—In Charity I hide
The monstrous features rushing to my view—
Fear not there, Grand-Papa—nor you—nor you,
For, should I show your features to each other,
Not one be known would by his Friend or Brother.

'Tis plain, in real life, from Youth to Age,
All wear their Masks. Here, only, on the Stage.
You see us as we are; *here* trust your eyes,
Our Wish to please cannot be mere Disguise!

WHICH IS THE MAN?

A COMEDY.

This Comedy was brought out at Covent Garden Theatre in the year 1782. *Doricourt in* THE BELLE'S STRATAGEM *is the Man of Fashion undepraved and happy, Lord Sparkle, in this Comedy, is the Man of Fashion depraved and disappointed.*

Letitia Hardy in the former Comedy, always understood *to be a Gentlewoman, is however almost always seen under some species of Disguise; Lady Bell Bloomer, in this Comedy, is the Model of an English Gentlewoman throughout.*

The Adventures of the PENDRAGONS, *deluded to London from their distant homes by the florid language lavished during an Election, form certainly a lively and pleasant* Memento *to Country Electors, and sometimes possibly even a useful one, at the moment of returning new Members to the Legislature.*

PROLOGUE.

Spoken by BEAUCHAMP, *in Regimentals.*

CALLED forth Thalia's standard to display
And here maintain her sovereign comic sway
As Chief, I'll reconnoitre well the ground
To learn what hostile lines are drawn around.

(Surveys with a Glass.)

That's not a dark defile in yonder glade!
For, should it prove a treach'rous ambuscade
No puffing miners have I here in pay
To sap their works, or turn their covert way,
No mercenary bands who have been wont
To hack and hew, like pioneers, in front.

With flying shells our Engineers shall try
That well mann'd battlement that towers so high!

(Upper Gallery.)

Beneath, our point-blank shot will surely reach,
And in yon half-moon battery make a breach.

(Second Gallery.)

This post advanced, the picket-guard to keep,

(Stage Boxes.)

And that Reserve, entrenched below chin deep, *(Pit.)*
We hope to carry by a bold exertion,
At least amuse with some well-plann'd Diversion!

My troops are Vet'rans: it has been their lot
To form in front of service—hissing hot;
And, when their ranks are gall'd, or put to flight,
They're sure to rally, and renew the fight
Unless—and then no light-dragoons scour fleeter,
Their powder fails for want of true salt-petre!

Our plan's avow'd; it is, from this firm station
To gain the Heights of public approbation!

CHARACTERS.

MEN.

LORD SPARKLE, — —	*Mr. Lee Lewes.*
FITZHERBERT, — —	*Mr. Henderson.*
BEAUCHAMP, — —	*Mr. Lewis.*
BELVILLE, — —	*Mr. Wroughton*
PENDRAGON, — —	*Mr. Quick.*

WOMEN

LADY BELL BLOOMER, —	*Miss Younge.*
JULIA, — — —	*Miss Satchell.*
SOPHY PENDRAGON, —	*Mrs. Mattocks.*
CLARINDA. — — —	*Mrs. Morton.*
KITTY, — — —	*Mrs. Wilson.*
TIFFANY, — — —	*Mrs. Davenett.*
MRS. JOHNSON. — — —	*Miss Platt.*

WHICH IS THE MAN?

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I. A DRAWING ROOM.

A loud Knocking.

MRS. JOHNSON *crosses the Stage, a* BOY *following.*

Mrs. Johns. Here, Betty, Dick! Where are you? Dont you see my Lord Sparkle's Carriage? I shall have my Lodgers disturbed by the thundering. (*Boy runs out.*) What in the name of Wonder can bring him here at this time in the Morning?—Up all night I suppose as usual!—Here comes the rake—

Enter LORD SPARKLE.

Spark. Bid 'em turn, I shant stay a moment.—So Mrs. Johnson, I pulled the string just to see how your Sylvans, the Pendragons, go on.

Mrs. J. As usual, my Lord; but how surprisingly early your Lordship is!

Spark. Late, you mean. I have not been in bed since yesterday at One. I am going now to rest for an hour or two, and then to the Drawing-room.

—But, what are the two Rustics about? I have not been plagued with them these three or four days.

Mrs. J. They are now out.

Spark. I supposed that—or I should not have called! But, prithee do they talk of returning to their native Woods again?

Mrs. J. Oh no! The young Gentleman, at least, seems to have very different ideas. Miss too has great Spirits, though she seems now and then at a loss what to do with herself.

Spark. Why dont you persuade her to employ herself in going back to Cornwall? You should tell them what a vile place London is, full of Snares!—You dont preach to them, Johnson!

Mrs. J. Indeed I do, my Lord; but their constant answer is—"Oh, Lord Sparkle is our friend, Lord Sparkle would take it amiss if we should go, 'twould look like distrusting his Lordship!"

Spark. Was ever man so hamper'd!—Two Fools! to mistake common Election forms and civilities—for serious Attachment!

Mrs. J. I fear my Lord that, towards the young Lady at least, you appeared to be serious.

Spark. Oh never. I saluted her; so I did all the women in the Parish--the Septennial Ceremony. The Brother I used to drink vile Port with, listen to his Village-Stories, call his vulgarity—Wit! and his impudence—Spirit! was not that Fatigue and Mortification enough, but I must be pestered with them here in Town!

Mrs. J. But, Miss boasts of pressing Invitations, and Letters—

Spark. Oh—things of course. They had Influence, and got me the Borough for my friend; I, in return, said she was the most charming girl in the World, that I adored her, and some few things—that every body says on such occasions, and nobody thinks of.

Mrs. J. But, it appears that Miss *did* think—

Spark. Oh! both of them regard all I said during the Election as serious—can you conceive any thing more ridiculous! I mentioned something about being happy to see them in Town *et cætera*—which I meant to have suspended our Acquaintance until the General Election. They took me at my word!—and, almost before I had reached it myself, they were in my house—all Joy and Congratulation! I did not chuse to be incumbered with them, and so placed them with you.

Mrs. J. I must say, I wish I was quit of them at present; for, my constant Lodger, Mr. Belville, came to Town last night, and he wants this drawing room to himself: he is obliged to share it now with Mr. Pendragon and his Sister!

Spark. Do what you please with them! The Boy was, at first, amusing, but, our Circles have had him. I feel nothing about them but that I want to get rid of them.—But, who is this hobbling up stairs? Ha! old Cato the Censor, my honourable kinsman. By what *Detour* shall I escape;—no avoiding him!—

[*Exit Mrs. Johnson.*

Enter Mr. Fitzherbert.

I wish I had been out of the house Fitzherbert before you appeared; I know I shall not escape abuse.

Fitz. I never attempt a Remedy, where there are no hopes of Amendment—your Lordship is safe!

Spark. Ha! ha! Was that meant for Wit?

Fitz. No—or I must have broken another of my Rules—to address to no mind what is beyond its apprehension.

Spark. Positively, you must now give me more of the felicity of your conversation—that I may catch some of that happy Ease which you possess in your rudeness; 'twould to me be an acquisition! I am eternally getting into the most horrid Scrapes—

merely by my Politeness and Good-breeding! Here are two persons now in this house for instance—

Fitz. Who do not know that the language, of what you call politeness, differs from that of Truth and Honour. You see I know to whom you allude. But we mutually waste time—Good day my Lord

Spark. Waste time! ha! ha! ha! Why of what Value can Time be to you? the greatest Enemy you have—it adds every day to your Wrinkles and Ill humour. I'll prove to you now, that I have employed the last twelve hours to better purpose than you. Nine of them you slept away;—the last three, you have been running about town, *snarling* and making people uneasy with themselves, whilst I have been sitting peaceably at White's, where I have won—guess what?

Fitz Half as much as you lost yesterday—a thousand or two Guineas perhaps.

Spark. Guineas! Poh! you are jesting! Gold is as scarce with us as in the Coffers of a Revolutionary State—like them we stake with Counters, and play for solid Earth.

Fitz. (*impatiently.*) Well!

Spark. Bullion is a mercantile kind of wealth, passing through the hands of Dry-salters, Vinegar-merchants, and Lord Mayors.—Our Goddess holds a Cornucopia instead of a Purse, from which she pours all the riches of cultivated Vallies and fruitful Hills. This morning, she popt into my dice-box a snug Villa, five hundred Acres arable and pasture, with the next Presentation to the Living of Guzzletun.

Fitz. A church-living in a Dice box!—And I suppose—will be bestowed as worthily as it was gained! Good day, my Lord, good day.

[*Turning from him.*

Spark. Good night, Crabtree—good night!

(*Going off.*)

Enter a SERVANT.

Tell Belville, I called to congratulate him on his escape from the Stupors of the Country. (*Going.*)

Fitz. My Lord!

Spark. Sir.

Fitz. I am going this morning to visit Lady Bell Bloomer—I give you this intimation that we may not risk another rencontre.

Spark. Civilly designed; and, for the same polite reason, I inform you that I shall be there—in the Evening. [*Exit Lord Sparkle.*

Fitz. Your Master in bed yet! what time was he in Town yesterday?

Servt. Late, Sir; we should have been earlier, but (*rapidly*) we met with Sir Harry Hairbrain on the road with his new Fox-hounds. Fell in with the hunt at Bagshot—broke Cover—ran the first burst across the Heath towards Datchet—Reynard then took right an end for Egham, sunk the wind upon us as far as Staines, where—he took the road to Oxford, and we Sir the road to Town. (*Bowing.*)

Fitz. Very geographical indeed Sir.—Now, pray inform your Master—Oh! here he comes—

[*Exit Servant.*

Enter BELVILLE, *in a Robe de Chambre.*

Just risen from your pillow!—a Fox-hunter, and in bed at eleven!

Belv. My dear, morose, charming, quarrelsome, old friend; I am ever in *Costume.* In the Country, I defy fatigue and hardship; up before the lazy slut Aurora has put on her pink to captivate the plough-boys, I scamper over hedge and ditch—alight at a Cottage half dead with hunger—drink milk out of the mug of a brown wench, and eat from a wooden platter. In Town, I am a fine gentleman—my hair

is exactly arranged—my cloaths *au dernier gout*—I cant dine but on made-dishes—I drink Burgundy, and—in five words—am every where in *Ton*.

Fitz. So much the worse, young man! To follow customs where Vice and Folly are the ruling Deities proves that you must be sometimes—not wise; and sometimes—

Belv. Oh! You Satirists, like moles, shut your eyes to the Light, and grope about for the dark side of the human character. There is a great deal of good sense and good Meaning in the world. As for its Follies, I think Folly mighty pleasant, it gives objects to amuse us; and to play the fool, at least gracefully, requires more talents than would set up a dozen Cynics.

Fitz. Then half the people I know must have never failing talents, for they have been playing the fool through many an added year;—in point is my precious kinsman Lord Sparkle whom I found here.

Belv. Aye! there's an instance of the fortunate result of total indifference to the sage maxims you recommend.

Fitz. Fortunate do you call it?

Belv. Most triumphant! Who so much admired? who so much the fashion?—the general favorite of the Ladies—the Model for Imitation with the men Is not Lord Sparkle the fortunate man who is to carry, from so many Rivals, the rich and charming widow Lady Bell Bloomer?—and will not you, after quarrelling with him half your life, at the end of it leave him a fine estate?

Fitz. No, no! I tell you no! (*with warmth.*)

Belv. Nay, his success with the Widow is certain. He boasts his triumph every where; and the Estate will follow of course, as she at least is a favorite of your's.

Fitz. If she marries Sparkle, she will be a favorite no longer! Yet, she receives him with such distinction, that sometimes she makes me fear it; how fre-

quently do we see women of Accomplishments and Beauty, to which every heart yields homage, throw themselves away on the vicious, the silly, and the vain!

Enter Servant.

Servant. Mr. Beauchamp.

Fitz. Oh! I expected him to call on you this morning; you must obtain his Confidence, it will assist me in my designs. When I found myself disappointed in his Lordship, I selected Beauchamp from the younger Branches of my family. But of this he knows nothing, and thinks himself indebted for every thing to the Patronage of Lord Sparkle; an error in which I wish him to continue, as it will give me an opportunity of proving them both.—But, here he comes, this way I can avoid him. [*Exit.*

Enter BEAUCHAMP.

Belv. Beauchamp!—and in Regimentals? Why, prithee George what spirit has seized thee now? When I saw thee last, thou wert devoted to some grave profession—the Law—or the Church. I expected to see thee, inveloped in Wig, wrangling at the bar; or placed in a Benefice—to receive tythe-pigs and poultry.

Beauch. Those Belville were my School designs; but, the fire of youthful manhood gave me ardors of a different sort. The heroes of the Areopagus and Forum have yielded to those of Marathon. I feel that, as it has so chanced that my choice is to be made at such a moment as this, I ought not to devote a life to learned Indolence—that might be gloriously hazarded for my Country struggling amidst surrounding foes!

Belv. I shant give you credit now for that fine Flourish!—This sudden ardor for—" The Pride,

Pomp, and Circumstance of War"—I dare swear springs from the Whim of some fine Lady, who fancied you would be a smarter fellow in a cockade and gorget, than in a stiff band and perriwig.

Beauch. If your insinuation means that my heart has not been insensible to the charms of some fair Lady, you are right. But, my transformation is owing to no whim of her's; for, oh! Charles—she never yet condescended to make me the object of her thoughts!

Belv. Modest too!—Aye, you were right in giving up the Law! But pray, who may this exalted Fair-one be—who never *condescended?*

Beauch. I never suffer my lips to pronounce the charming sounds that form her Name. I have a kind of miserly felicity in hoarding the idea of her from others.

Belv. Ha! ha! ha! who *can* the Nymph be, who has inspired so *obsolete* a passion! In the days of Chivalry it would have been the Rage.

Beauch. I will gratify you thus far—The Lady has Beauty—but, above all, Wit, Spirit, a Mind.—Is it possible Charles actually to love a woman without a Mind?

Belv. Has she a mind for you? That is the more important Question.

Beauch. I dare not nourish my passion with so presumptuous a hope; yet, I would not extinguish it if I could. For mine is a love that drives me not into corners to wear out my days in complaint—its ardors shall be felt in the land of our Enemies; they shall know how well I love.

Belv. Poh! Poh! This is the gallantry of One thousand One Hundred and One; or, 'tis the kind of passion that animated our fathers in the fields of *Cressy* and *Poictiers.*—Why, no Beauty of our Age man will be won in *this* stile!—Now, suppose yourself at the Opera (*looking through his hand*)—"That's a fine Girl! Twenty thousand you say? I think I'll have her. Yes—I—I'll call on her tomor-

row, and tell her so."—Have you Spirit and Courage enough for that my Achilles?

Beauch.—No truly.

Belv. Then give up all thoughts of being received!

Belv. I have no thoughts of hazarding a Rejection! The Pride of Birth, and some hundreds for my education, were the sole patrimony the imprudence of a father left me. My relation Lord Sparkle, has procured me a Commission; at least it was sent to me, and I cannot doubt that it was he who obtained it for me. Generously to offer that, and a knapsack, to a Lady of five thousand a year, would be to merit the dismission I should incur.

Belv. But, suppose she were to take a fancy to the knapsack?

Beauch. That would reduce me to the torturous necessity of retreating from Success; for never can I submit to be quartered on a wife's fortune in Idleness, whilst I have a sword to carve subsistence for myself.

Belv. That may be in the *great* stile, but 'tis scarcely in the *fashionable*.—Will you take chocolate in my dressing room?

Beauch. No. I am going to receive Orders at my Colonel's. Where shall we meet in the evening?

Belv. Why, I know not, I commit myself to Chance for the remainder of the day—it will finish as she directs. [*Exeunt, on opposite sides.*

SCENE II.

AN APARTMENT AT CLARINDA'S.

Enter CLARINDA, *reading a Catalogue, followed by* TIFFANY.

Clar. Poor Lady Squander! So the Auctioneer has her Jewels and Furniture at last. Mark those Pearls. (*Gives her the Catalogue*) It must be a great Comfort to her, to see her Trinkets worn by her friends! Who was here last night? (*Sitting down, and taking some Cards from the table.*) I came home so late, I forgot to enquire. (*Reads*) *Mrs. Jessamy—Lady Racket—Miss Belvoir—Lord Sparkle*—(*starting up*)—Lord Sparkle here! What Dulness led me to go to Lady Price's? I wish she, and her Concert of three fiddles and a flute—had been playing to her kids on the Welch Mountains! Why did you persuade me to go out last night?

Tiff. Dear Ma'am, you seemed so low spirited, that I thought—

Clar. I missed him every where! At four places he was just gone as I came in.—But, what does it signify? 'twas Lady Bell Bloomer he was seeking—his attachment to the Relict is every where the Subject. I wish the term Widow was abolished, I really believe there is something cabalistical in the word.—Since last February, no less than fourteen fine young fellows of Fortune have been drawn by them into the matrimonial compact.

Tiff. Well, I am sure I wish Lady Bell was married; she's always injuring your sweet temper Ma'am.

Clar. Gives she not cause? Till *she* broke upon the Town, I was the Star of Fashion; my Dress, my Equipage, my Furniture, and myself, were the Criterions of Taste; but, a new French Lady's Maid enabled her, *Presto*, to turn the tide against me.

Tiff. Aye, I dont know what good these Ma'amselles do.

Clar. But, Tiffany, she is to be at Court to day, out of mourning for the first time—I am resolved to be there.—No, I wont go. If she should outshine me, by my being witness to it—her triumph will be encreased. I wont go to St. James's, but I'll be at her Rout this evening, and, if 'tis possible, prevent Lord Sparkle's being particular to her. Perhaps that will put her into an ill-humour—and then the advantage will be on my side! [*Exit Clarinda.*

Tiff. Mercy on us! To be chamber-maid to a *Miss* on the brink of Thirty—one need have more skill than those who manage the Nation. Now, if she should rise from her toilette to day—not quite in looks, or, if the desertion of a Lover, or the victory of a Rival, should happen—ten to one but I, without a Pension to live on, shall be compelled to retire! [*Exit.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I. AN ELEGANT APARTMENT AT LADY BELL BLOOMER'S.

Enter JULIA, *with Letters in her hand.*

Julia. What an invaluable Treasure! These dear Letters, that have lain so long within the chill walls of a Convent, uninteresting to every one around, are to me the source of utmost Happiness. He is in England! How little he suspects that I too am here!

Enter KITTY.

Kitty. Mr. Fitzherbert will be here immediately, Ma'am.

Julia. Mr. Fitzherbert? very well. Has Lady Bell left her Toilette yet?

Kitty. (*exceedingly fast.*) No Ma'am. Mr. Crape the hair dresser has been here these three hours, her Maid is running here and there, and Mr. John is flying about to Milliners and Perfumers, and the new *Vis-a-vis* is at the door to carry her Ladyship to Court. Black is banished, and the Liveries are shining with Silver! All the rest of the house are in *such* a hurry about the Rout that her Ladyship is to give this Evening! They say that all the World—

Julia. Ha! ha! ha! Prithee stop! I cant wonder that Lady Bell is transported at dropping her Weeds, for it seems to have turned the heads of the whole family.

Kitty. Oh! dearee, Ma'am to be sure! For, now Lady Bell has such fine Spirits, we shall be so gay! —And tis well she has; for the servants tell me, their old master would have broke her heart. They all adore her.—I wish you were a little gayer Ma'am—somehow we're so quiet!—Tis a wonder so young and so pretty a Lady—

Julia. Dont run into Impertinence. I have neither the taste or talents for Public Life that Lady Bell Bloomer has.

Kitty. Laws, Ma'am tis all Use. You are always at home; but Lady Bell knows that Wit and Beauty are lost at a fire-side—at home. (*drawling*). She shines every evening at half the houses of half a dozen parishes—and in the Mornings we have Copies of Verses in the Papers, and all the fine things said that fine ladies are so fond of.

Julia. I can bear your Freedoms no longer! Carry these flowers, and tell her Ladyship that I sent to Richmond for them, as I know her fondness for natural *Bouquets;* and bid Harry deny me to every body this morning—except Mr. Fitzherbert.

[*Exit Kitty.*

Enter Mr. FITZHERBERT.

Fitz. Happily excepted, my dear Ward. But, I suppose you heard my step, and threw in my name for a *Douceur.* I can hardly believe that you, who shut your door against Youth and Flattery, would open it to a cross Old Man—who seldom entertains you on any subject but your foibles.

Julia. How you mistake, Sir! You are the greatest Flatterer I have—your whole conduct flatters me

with Esteem and Love; and (*smiling*) as you do not squander these on many—

Fitz. They are excited but by few Objects, it is true; but then, my sentiments of them are proportionably more fervent. My attachments are fifty times as strong as those of your *smiling* people, who are every one's humble servant — and scarcely any body's Friend.—Where is Lady Bell?

Julia. Yet at her Toilette I believe. My dear Sir, I am every hour more indebted to you for having given me a Friend so charming!

Fitz. So I would have you. When you arrived from France I prevailed upon her Ladyship to grant you her society, that you might add, to the polish of an elegant Mind, the Graces of elegant Manners. Here she comes! her Tongue and her steps keeping time—

Enter Lady BELL—*dressed for Court.*

Aye, aye, if all the women in the world were merely prating young Widows, pining Love would disappear, and our Bachelors grow reasonable and discreet!

Lady Bell. Oh you monster! But, I am in such divine Spirits, that nothing you can say can destroy them.—My sweet Julia, what an elegant *Bouquet!* Lady Serena will expire. She was enveloped in flowers and evergreens last night in such ill taste, that she looked like the Picture of fair Rosamond in her Bower.—My dear Fitz, do you know we dined yesterday in Hill street, and had the fortitude to stay till Eleven!

Julia. My Patience was exhausted by the fatiguing visit.

Lady Bell. Now *I* came away with a fresh Want for Society. The persevering Civilities of Sir Andrew, and the maukish Insipidity of his tall daughter, act like your Olives Sir—which though not very

pleasing themselves heighten your Gusto for the residue of your wine.

Fitz. Why then you cant do better than serve up Sir Andrew and his Daughter at your next Entertainment.

Lady Bell. So I would—but, as one cannot remove them at Will, they will give the Guests but a Gusto for Departure!—But, how do you like me? did you ever see so delightful a Head? Dont you think I shall make a thousand Conquests to day?

Fitz. Doubtless, provided those on whom you make War are weak! But pray near which of those prisoners you have already made, will these gay Insignia of your Liberty be chiefly displayed?

Lady Bell. Perhaps, near him who will feel little interested about them.

Julia. Pray who is that?

Lady Bell. Oh, your mercy! to answer that requires more reflection than I have ever given the subject.

Julia. Should you build a temple to Love, would Lord Sparkle's name be found on the Altar?

Lady Bell. Oh! Lord Sparkle!—Who can resist the gay, the elegant, the all-conquering, Lord Sparkle? —the most distinguished Feather that floats in the region of fashion—void of all the barbarous solidity that would sink him down to characters of Weight. Fashionable—because, he is well dressed, brilliant—because he is of the first Clubs, and uses his borrowed Wit, like his borrowed gold, as freely as though it were his own.

Fitz. But, pray how is it that you receive this man, whom you understand so well, as though his Tinsel were pure gold?

Lady Bell. Oh—why the world is charitable, and receives tinsel for Gold in most cases.

Fitz. But, is none of this sunshine to extend beyond Lord Sparkle—will you not dart a Ray on the spirited yet modest Beauchamp?

Lady Bell. A ray for Beauchamp!—You know his Mistress is War! (*Sighing*)—Were I so inclined, I must change my Fan for a Spear, mount my Feathers on a Helmet, and stand forth a Minerva—both in Wisdom and Courage. But, why do I trifle thus?—the hour of Triumph is at hand!

Fitz. Of what?

Lady Bell. The moment of Conquest—the moment when, after having shewn myself at half the houses in St. George's, I am set down at St. James's:—as I ascend, the whisper'd question flies through the croud—Who is she? Who is that sweet creature? one of the four Heiresses, says one—a Foreign Ambassadress, says another.—I ascend the stairs—move slowly through the rooms—drop my fan—incommode my Bouquet—stay to adjust, that the *little* gentry may have Time to fix their admiration. Again move on—enter the drawing room—throw a flying Glance round the Circle, and see—nothing but Spite in the eyes of the Women, and a thousand Anxieties in those of the men.

Julia. The very soul of Giddiness!

Lady Bell. Say—of Happiness!—Think of a widow just emerged from her weeds, for one to whom her father, not her *Heart*, united her. My jointure elegant—my figure charming—nay deny it if you dare! Pleasure, Fortune, Youth, Health, all attending me, whilst Innocence and Conscious Honour are my handmaids to guide me through the dangerous Ordeal.

Fitz. Though Innocence and Conscious Honour attend you, you may as well let Prudence join the Party, or your Centinels may—

Lady Bell. Oh! I'm mistress of my whole situation, and cannot be surprised.—But foolish I! am losing Empire every moment I stay. The Loves have prepared their rosy garlands—my triumphal car is,waiting—and my proud steeds neighing to be gone—Away to Conquest! [*Exit.*

Fitz. A charming woman, Julia! she conceals a

fine Understanding under apparent giddiness, and the tenderest Sensibility beneath an air of Indifference.

Julia. Her Sensibility is greater than she permits herself to suspect! I rally her about Lord Sparkle—but, Mr. Beauchamp is never mentioned without her cheeks telling such blushing truths—as she would never forgive me for observing.

Fitz. Julia!—you seem well acquainted with your friend's Heart.—Will you be equally frank as to your own?

Julia. (*in great Confusion*) Sir!—*my* heart!

Fitz. Yes; will you assist me in reading it?

Julia. Sir!—certainly, Sir!

Fitz. Then tell me whether, amongst the powdered gilded moths whom your Beauty, or Fortune, have allured, there is one whom you would honour with your hand?—Aye, take time; I would not have you be precipitate.

Julia. (*hesitatingly.*) No Sir—not one.

Fitz. Julia! in perfect reliance on what you have now stated, and much pain may ensue if you deceive me, I inform you that a friend of mine is arrived in town, whom I mean this morning to introduce to you.

Julia. As—

Fitz. As a Lover—who has my warmest wishes that he may become your husband.

Julia. Do I know the person, for whom you are thus interested, Sir?

Fitz. You do not; but I have had long intimacy with him, and 'tis the dearest wish of my Heart, to see him and Julia Manners, in due time, united.

Julia. I trust, Sir, you will allow—

Fitz. Be under no apprehensions. Much as I am interested in this union, your inclinations must be attended to. I am now going to your Lover, and hope to introduce him to you this morning. Come, be not distressed at the approach of that

period which will give you Dignity and Character in Society:—the marriage state is that in which your sex evinces its importance; it is in the interesting circle of domestic duties that a woman has her best opportunity of cultivating every virtue that constitutes the Great and the Amiable. [*Exit Fitzherbert.*

Julia. The moment I so much dreaded is arrived! When may I reveal that I am already married?—that I have dared to take upon me those important Duties!—My serious promise to my Husband prevents me. But where is he—whilst *I* am left defenceless to brave offended Authority? [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

BELVILLE'S LODGINGS.

Enter BELVILLE, *new dressed, and a Servant.*

Bel. Let the chaise be at the door tomorrow at Six, for I shall dine at Dover. [*Exit Servant.*

Enter FITZHERBERT.

Fitz. Ha! just in time I hear. You are ready for Flight!

Belv. True, but it would have been first to you—to know the cause of your summoning me from the Dryads and Hamadryads of Berkshire. Your Letter reach'd me at the very instant I was setting out for Dover, in my way to Paris.

Fitz. Poh! poh! You are but just returned—stay where you are. The passage between Dover and Calais is destructive to this kingdom; I wish there were Toll-Houses erected on our confines, to restrain, with a heavy Tax, the number of Travellers.

Belv. I fear the Tax would be more felt than the

Benefit;—it would not only restrain folly-mongers and fashion-mongers—but the rational enquirer.

Fitz. So much the better—so much the better. Our travelling Philosophers have done more towards destroying the nerves of their country than all the Politics of France. Their aim seems to be establishing Infidelity, and captivating with delusive views of manners still more immoral and licentious than our own.——Why who can this be? Oh, the Cornish Lad, I suppose, whom Lord Sparkle placed here.

Belv. (*laughing*) Yes; an odd being! He was designed by Nature for a Clodpole, but—the Notice of a Lord overset the little understanding he had, and, so he commenced fine-gentleman. He has a Sister, who till her father's death ran wild upon the Commons; but she fancies her wildness is Wit, and *satirizes* Bruin. Here he comes.

Enter PENDRAGON.

Pen. My dear fellow-lodger, I'm come to—Oh! your Servant, Sir (*to Fitzherbert*)—Is this Gentleman a friend of your's?

Belv. He is.

Pen. Your hand Sir! (*passes Belville, and stands between them*) If you are Mr. Belville's friend, you are my friend, and therefore we are all friends—I soon make acquaintance.

Fitz. You are a happy man!

Pen. Oh yes—it is owing to my Politeness. I have been in the Great World almost six weeks, and I can see no difference between the Great World and the little world, only they've no Ceremony; and so, as that's the new Mark of Good-breeding, I try to hit it off.

Fitz. And with Success!

Pen. To convince you of that, I'll tell you a good thing.—You must know—

Fitz. Excuse me now; but I am convinced you

will amuse me, and desire your company to dinner—they'll give you my address below. Mr. Belville I have business of Importance with you.

[*Exit with Belville.*

Pen. He must be a Lord by his want of Ceremony—I'm glad he ask'd me to dinner! (*imitating*) "Mr. Belville, I have business of Importance with you"—and so they cut!—Now in Cornwall we should have thought that blank rude;—but, 'tis easy—" Mr. Belville, I have business of Importance"—(*going*) Easy—Easy—Easy!

Enter SOPHY PENDRAGON.

Sophy. Brother Bob!—brother Bob!

Pen. (*returning*) I desire Miss Pendragon you wont *brother* me at this rate—making me look, as if one didn't know Life.—How often shall I tell you, that 'tis the most unfashionable thing in the world for relations to *Brother*, and *Father*, and *Cousin*, one another—and all that kind of thing. I didn't get the better of my Shame for three days, when you bawled out to Mrs. Dobson at last Launceston Concert—"Aunt, Aunt, here's room between Brother and I, if *Cousin* Dick will sit closer to *Uncle* and *Father!*"

Sophy. Lack-a-day!—and where's the harm? What d'ye think one has relations given one for?—To be ashamed of 'em?

Pen. I dont know what they are given us for; but I know few young men of Fashion put much value on them.

Sophy. More shame for your young men of Fashion. But I assure you, Brother Bob, I shall never give in to any such unnatural new-fangled ways. As for you, since Lord Sparkle took Notice of you, you are quite another thing. You used to creep into the parlour, when Father had company, hanging your head like a dead Partridge; steal all round the room behind their backs, to get at a chair; and sit down on

one corner of it, tying knots in your handkerchief; and, if any one drank your health, rise up, and scraping your foot—so—say "Thank you kindly, Sir!"—

Pen. By Goles, if you—(*shaking his fist.*)

Sophy. But now! when you enter a room, your hat is tossed carelessly on a table; you pass the company with a half bend of your body; fling yourself into one chair, and throw your legs on another;—"Pray, my dear Sir, (*mimicking*)—do me the favour to ring—John, Lemonade!—Mrs. Plume has been driving me all the morning in Hyde Park against the wind, and the dust has made my throat mere Plaister of Paris!"—

Pen. Hang me, if I dont like myself at second hand better than I thought I should! Why, if I do it as well as you Sophy, I shall soon be quite the thing! And, now I'll give you a bit of Advice:—as Lord Sparkle must introduce you to High Life, 'tis fitting you should know how to behave; and, as I have been amongst them, I can tell you.

Sophy. Well!

Pen. Why, first of all, if you should come into a Drawing Room, and find twenty or thirty people in the Circle, you are not to take the least Notice of any one.

Sophy. No!

Pen. No.—A servant, who does not know Manners, will perhaps present you a chair—if not, glide into the nearest. The conversation will not be interrupted by your entrance; for, they'll take as little notice of you, as you of them.

Sophy. Pshaw! for shame.

Pen. Then, be sure to be equally indifferent to the coming in of others. I saw poor Lady Carmine one night dying with confusion for the vulgarity and ill-breeding of her friend, who actually rose from her chair at the entrance of Lady Betty Blurt.

Sophy. Be quiet Bob!

Pen. True, as I am now a young man of Fashion!

Then, you must never let your discourse go beyond —one word.—If any one should chance to take the Trouble to entertain the Company, you may throw in—" Charming !" — " Odious" ! — " Capital !" — Never mount to a Phrase—unless to that dear delightful one of—" *all that sort of thing.*"—The use made of that is wonderful! " All that sort of thing" is an apology for want of Wit; is a Substitute for Argument;—it serves instead of the Point of a Story, or the Fate of a battle !

Sophy. Well then—upon going away!

Pen. Oh—you go away, as you came in. If one has a mind to give the Lady of the house a nod (*nodding*) one may; but, 'tis still higher breeding to leave her—with as little Ceremony, as I do you !

[*Exit without looking at her.*

Sophy. I wish I could be quite sure it was, as he says, the Fashion not to mind Forms—I'd go directly and visit Lord Sparkle. In all the Books I have read, I never met with a Lover so careless as he! Sometimes I think the Reason is because—I make myself but too agreeable! and then, I recollect all I have read about the good effect of half breaking Lover's hearts by treating them with Disdain !—but then, he wont come near me! I'll know, though, what he intends soon. He shant think to bring me from the Land's end to make a Fool of me—Sophy Pendragon has more Spirit than he thinks for !

[*Exit.*

Enter FITZHERBERT *and* BELVILLE.

Bel. A Wife! Heaven's last, and best, Gift !—But—a—no I cant bring my mind to marry any one now.

Fitz. But, I say you shall! I have studied you from Eighteen, and know your Character—faults and virtues; and, such as you are, I've pick'd you out

from all the blockheads about you—to take a fine girl off my hands with twenty thousand pounds.

Bel. 'Tis a Bribe doubtless—is she Coquette, Prude, or Vixen?

Fitz. You may make her what you will. Treat her with Confidence, Tenderness, and Respect, and she'll be an Angel; be morose, suspicious, and neglectful, and she'll be—a Woman. The Wife's Character and Conduct is a Comment on that of the Husband.

Bel. (*gaily*) Any thing more?

Fitz. She is my Ward, and the daughter of a Friend of my youth who died last year in the West Indies. I feel parental affection for her, and give you the highest proof of my Esteem—in transferring to You the care of her Happiness. Refuse it, if you dare.

Bel. Dare! My dear friend, I *must* refuse the honour—

Fitz. How!

Bel. To be serious, I am not at Liberty to wed the Lady.

Fitz. I am disappointed! I should have mentioned this subject to you, before I had suffered it to make so strong a feature in my Picture of future Happiness.

Bel. Would you had, that I might have informed you at once—that I am—married.

Fitz. Married! Where—when—how—to whom?

Bel. *Where?*—in France.—*When?* about three months since. *How?*—by the Embassador's Chaplain. *To whom?*—Ah—such a one! Her Beauty is of the Greek kind, pleasing the mind more than the eye—yet, to the eye, nothing can be more lovely;—to this charming creature add the name of—Julia Manners, and you know my Wife.

Fitz. Julia Manners!—Julia Manners did you say?

Bel. Yes Julia Manners. I first knew her at the house of a friend in Paris, whose Daughters were in

the same Convent. I often visited her at the Grate; at length, lest in the vicissitudes of life I should lose her—I on being summoned by my Uncle suddenly prevailed upon her, through the assistance of Mademoiselle *St. Val*, to give me her hand; but was instantly torn from her to join him at Florence, whence I was dispatched to England in official employ.

Fitz. (*Aside.*—So, so, so—very fine.)—I suppose you had the prudence to make yourself acquainted with the Lady's family before you married her?

Bel. Yes, her Family and Fortune are distinguished. She has a Guardian, whose Address the sweet Obstinate refused to give me, that she might herself break to him the marriage; that however I had important Reasons to make her promise not to do, until we were, both of us, in England!

Fitz. Then, you have not seen your bride here?

Bel. Oh, no! My Julia is yet in her Convent. I have been preparing for her reception in Berkshire, and had written to inform her that I would meet her at Calais; but, I fear my Letters have missed her, and shall therefore set out for Paris to conduct to England the Woman—on whom depends my every Felicity.

Fitz. (*Aside.* And, has Julia been capable of marrying without being sure of my Approbation?—Ungrateful Girl! is it thus she rewards my Anxieties!)—

Bel. Your reserve and resentment my dear friend, whilst it flatters, distresses me.

Fitz. I am indeed offended at your marriage, but, not with you—on *You* I had no claims.

Belv. I do not apprehend you.

Fitz. Perhaps not, and at present I shall not explain myself. (*Going.*)

Belv. If you *will* leave me, Adieu! I am going to saunter over the Town. My mind, impatient for the moment which carries me to my sweet Bride, feels all the intermediate time a void, which accident must fill up. [*Exit.*

Fitz. Spite of my displeasure, I can hardly conceal from him his happiness! Yet, I will—Julia must endure some little punishment! Why dread to entrust me at once—did she think me severe? To Vice and Folly I am content so to appear; but *she* ought not to have thought me so. I must correct this want of Confidence, and—let me see—Pendragon shall be my instrument! I'll take him home with me.—Yes yes, young Lady, you shall indeed be plagued by a Lover!

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I. LORD SPARKLE'S.

Lord SPARKLE *and* BEAUCHAMP *at a writing Table.*

SPARKLE *superbly dressed.*

Spark. Poor George! and so, thou wilt really be, in a few days, on the Atlantic.

Farewell to Green Fields, and sweet Groves,
Where Chloe engaged thy fond Heart!

(Rises, and comes forward.)

Hey for Counterscraps, Wounds, and Victory!

Beauch. I accept your last word for my Omen! —and now, in the true spirit of Homer's Heroes, I should depart with its Influence on me.

Spark. First, take an office which I know must charm you—you admire Lady Bell Bloomer?

Beauch. Admire her! Heaven knows, Yes! *(with great warmth.)*

Spark. No Heroics, dear George—no Heroics! They are totally out now, both in Love and—War.

Beauch. How so, my Lord?

Spark. Indifference!—that's the Rule.—We love, hate, quarrel, and even fight! without suffering our Tranquility to be incommoded—nothing disturbs. The keenest discernment will discover nothing par-

ticular in the behaviour of Lovers on the point of Marriage—or of the Married whilst the Articles of Separation are preparing.

Beauch. Disgusting Apathy! The Energies of the Heart are lost in this wretched system! Suffer you your feelings thus to be annihilated?

Spark. Oh, no! I feel, for instance, that I must have Lady Bell Bloomer, and therefore I feel a degree of curiosity to know her Sentiments of me—of which however I have very little doubt. But, all my Art cannot make her serious; she fences most skilfully. To you she will be less on her guard.

Beauch. Me! you surprise me, my Lord! How can I be of use in developing her Ladyship's sentiments?

Spark. Why, by scrutinizing them. When you talk of me, see whether she blushes. Mention some woman as one whom I am supposed to admire—and observe whether she makes some spiteful remark on her Shape, Complexion, or Conduct; provoke her to abuse me with Violence, or to speak of me with Confusion—in either case, I have her.

Beauch. Your Instructions are comprehensive, my Lord; but, I do not feel myself equal to the Embassy.

Spark. (*piqued*) Your pardon, Sir! You refuse me then?

Beauch. I cannot refuse—my obligations to your Lordship make it impossible; but of all mankind, I perhaps am the last you should have chosen.

Spark. Nay, prithee dont be ridiculous; it is the last service you can render me; and you are the only man whom I could trust with so delicate an office.

Beauch. I must then my Lord accept the office as a proof of your Confidence, and will discharge the Commission faithfully.—(*Aside.* This will at least give me an occasion to converse with Lady Bell,

and to converse with her on Love; How shall I restrain myself in the trying moment! [*Exit.*

Spark. Ha! ha! ha! I am confirmed in my suspicions that the fellow has had the Vanity to indulge a passion for Lady Bell himself. So much the better! the Task I have given him will secure him a sufficient punishment for his presumption!

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Mrs. Kitty is below, my Lord, Miss Manners's Woman.

Spark. Ha! show her up—show her up. (*Exit Servant.*)—The News just arrived of the Agent's having absconded through whom the whole of Julia's Fortune was to be remitted from the West Indies, gives hopes that she may sink within my reach! I wont give up that affair—no—it will be rather brilliant to have Lady Bell for a Wife—and her friend for *my* friend—'twill be a Point, I'll have the *eclat* of it!—

Enter KITTY.

Well Kitty, what Intelligence—what says the frost-piece Julia?

Kitty. Oh, nothing new my Lord. She is as sensible as ever to the Loss that depresses her (which for some reason she conceals from Mr. Fitzherbert) and is as insensible as ever to you! I makes Orations, all day long, of your Lordship's Merit, and Goodness, and Fondness, and—

Spark. Merit, and Goodness, and Fondness!—and dont you throw in a word or two on my Sobriety and Neatness too!—Ha! ha! ha! you foolish Novice I thought you knew better! Tell her of my Fashion, my Extravagance, that I play deepest at the Subscription house, am the most tastefully dressed at the

Opera, and have flirted with, and broken the hearts of, half the fine women of the day.—Goodness and Fondness are for Prudes of the old school, and not for modern females.

Kitty. What, my Lord, is boasting faults the way to win a fair Lady!

Spark. Faults! What, have all past Lessons been thrown away upon thee! have I not made thee comprehend that the governing passion of many a female mind is—the rage of being envied? How many of them, think'st thou, would dislike breaking the hearts of half-a-dozen of their Rivals? Go home again, good Kitty, and con your Lessons afresh; and, if you can pick up any stories of irregularities, affix my name to them, and repeat them to your Mistress.

Kitty. But she'll tell them to Lady Bell perhaps, for a Warning!

Spark. For a warning, quotha! My devoirs to Lady Bell are of a different kind, and we understand each other. I address her for a Wife, because she is the Fashion; and I have Designs on Julia—as a Friend, because, in the state of Modern Manners, we get them if we can from higher Orders than Sempstresses. The Girl is beautiful, and the ruinous loss of her Fortune gives some hope of attaining her.

Kitty. Your Bribes are high, my Lord, but—

Spark. Yes, but—no buts if you please. And, remember, we must keep our Secret, the with whom, and the place, of her retreat from her Guardian Mr. Fitzherbert my relation—or it may mar my Expectations there!

Kitty. Oh Gemini! I'll do any thing to plague Mr. Fitzherbert—and can go on now with a safe Conscience—for he had like to have lost me my place once because he thought I was flighty;—but I'll be up with him now!

Spark. (*Aside.*) Alas!—alas! Mistress Kitty, we easily find Reasons, when we are inclined to do wrong!

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Mr. Belville. [*Exit.*

Spark. My dear Belville! (*Apart.* Go Kitty, wait without; I'll speak to you presently.) [*Exit Kitty.* Welcome once more to the region of business and pleasure.

Belv. I thank you. But pray, my Lord, dont dismiss the Lady.

Spark. The Lady! Ha! ha! ha! That Lady, Sir, is a Lady's *Gentlewoman*, a'n't please you.—I suppose you have heard that I am going to marry Lady Bell Bloomer; we are the two greatest Powers in the regions of Fashion, and of course must endeavour to form an Alliance.

Belv. A clear Deduction.

Spark. Now, she has a friend, humbled by late events, whom I mean at the same time to endeavour to take—as mine;—wont that be a Hit—eh!

Belv. Decidedly. Every thing with you my Lord is a Hit.——But, attempts in such circumstances are rather irregular!

Spark. Oh, I detest mechanical regularity. Men of Sense have one mode of getting through life; men of Genius, another.

Belv. Doubtless. And the advantage is with the men of Genius, for to their Genius are all their Faults imputed; which are considered as the graceful Meanderings of a mind too ethereal to be kept down within the Rules of Common Sense and Decorum; a mighty easy way of raising reputation—Ha! ha! ha! You are dressed with infinite malice to day, my Lord.

Spark. Malice! Not at all. Women now are neither caught by finery or person;—I am dressed for Court. I hear there is to be a presentation of *Misses* to day, and I would not for the world lose the dear creatures' blushes on their first appearance—the

whole of their remaining stock is frequently expended on the occasion—Will you go?

Belv. 'Tis too late to dress. Besides I have devoted this day to idle rambling, so that perhaps I may see some of them. And dangerous enough it is to gaze upon the new stars that have come out in the Galaxy of Beauty in high Life during my absence. As I came, the rays of a pair of black eyes might have annihilated me, had not, at the same instant, two beautiful blue ones from a window encountered me, from which I was relieved by a little rosy mouth that betrayed, with a deceitful smile, teeth most murderously white. A Galatea darted by me on the right, whilst a Helen glided in her Car on my left; in short, from such sweet besiegers nothing could have preserved me, but the sweeter charms of a beloved, though absent, fair one! (*Sighing*).

Spark. Absentees! I never trouble my head about them. I admire Beauty as much as any one; but, it must be all in the present tense. Shall I set you down any where? I must go.

Belv. No; but, if you'll permit me, I'll pen a short Note to Beauchamp on business I had forgot this morning.

Spark. Use my writing table. I have been penning a Note to my Steward to raise my Vassals rents. (*Belville begins to write.*) I really pity them! but, how can one help it whilst one is obliged to wear the produce of so many Acres in a Suit? Adieu!

Belv. (*writing.*) Good morning!—my Compliments to the Ladies blushes! [*Exit Lord Sparkle.*

Enter KITTY; *passes* BELVILLE *in front of the Stage.*

Kitty. So, so, his Lordship has forgot me! I must go after him.

Belv. (*coming forward*) Ah! that's the *Confidante!* So pretty one, whose chattels are you?

Kitty. My Mistress's, Sir.

Belv. And who is your Mistress?

Kitty. A Lady Sir.

Belv. Her Name?

Kitty. That of her Father, I take it.

Belv. Upon my word your Lady has a very brilliant Servant.—Is she as fond of shining as you?

Kitty. Not quite—or she would not keep me to eclipse her.

Belv. Bravo! I wish I could know who she is. Will you tell me her Name?

Kitty. Can you spell?

Belv. Why—Yes.

Kitty. Why then—you'll find it in the four-and-twenty Letters. (*Going.*)

Belv. (*Catching her hand*) Nay you go not until you have satisfied my Curiosity.

Kitty. Poh! what signifies asking me? You know well enough who she is.—I heard you and Lord Sparkle talking about her. Let me go, for I am to carry a Message from my Mistress to Mr. Fitzherbert.

Belv. Mr. Fitzherbert!

Kitty. Aye, her Guardian.

Belv. Her Guardian! What, Fitzherbert of Cambridgeshire?

Kitty. Yes; and if you want to know more, he's the crossest old wretch that ever breathed. You'll find him out easily by that Description—and so your servant! [*Exit.*

Belv. Fitzherbert's Ward! and this creature her servant! and Lord Sparkle plotting against her—the very Lady this morning offered for my Bride! I will find Fitzherbert instantly.—Humbled by late Events! —this heightens Interest in her welfare. That I may not be guilty of a breach of Humanity and of Gratitude, I must pay that obedience to the dictates of Honour, which Lord Sparkle, according to his system of Ethics, will perhaps deem a breach of it! [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

LADY BELL BLOOMER'S.

Enter FITZHERBERT, *followed by a* SERVANT.

Fitz. Tell Miss Manners I am here. (*Exit Servant*). I cannot perhaps be seriously angry with Julia; but, before I acquaint her with the felicity that attends her, I must take some little revenge on her disobedience. Come in, Young Cornish, pray!

Enter PENDRAGON.

Pen. What, does the Lady live in this fine house?

Fitz. Yes. But, pray observe—I dont engage she will be absolutely *smitten* with you. I can but introduce you—the rest must depend upon the brilliancy and Spirit of your Manners!

Pen. Oh then leave me alone for that! I knew how 'twould be, if once I shewed myself in London. If she has a long purse, I'll whisk her down to Cornwall, jockey Lord Sparkle, and have the Borough myself!

Fitz. You have Spirit I see.

Pen. Oh, that nobody ever doubted! I have beat our Exciseman, and gone to law with the Parson; and, to show you I didn't leave my Spirit behind me in the Country, since I came to London I have ridden for nothing, by summoning a Coachman for impertinence in demanding too great a fare.

Fitz. A prudent Reformer!—But, here comes the Lady.—

Enter JULIA.

Mr. Pendragon, this is my Ward, who, I am sure will

give your Addresses—all the encouragement they merit!

Pen. Your devoted Ma'am.—(*Apart.*—She looks plaguy glum!)

Fitz. Pray, my dear, speak to Mr. Pendragon. You seem greatly confused!

Pen. Oh, Sir, I understand all that! Young Ladies will look confused and embarrassed, and all that sort of thing, on these occasions; but, we men of the World are up to all that.

Julia. (*Aside.*)—Is it to such a Being that I should have been sacrificed!

Pen. I see your Ward is one of the diffident ones —I thought you told me she was high bred!

Fitz. Oh, now and then, you find a person of that cast in the best company.

Pen. Do you know, I used to blush formerly, and be modest and all that kind of affair; but, if any one ever catches me in that state again I'll give 'em my estate for a Pilchard.

Julia. Then it seems impossible—(*to Mr. Fitzherbert*—pardon me Sir!)—that a union can take place between you and me—for I place modesty amongst the Elegancies of manners, and think it absolutely necessary to the character of a Gentleman!

Fitz. (*Aside.*—Well said, Julia!)—Fie!—why treat my Friend with such asperity?

Pen. Oh, leave her to me Sir,—she's ignorant; but, I'll cultivate her mind. There are but three points Miss necessary to the character of a Gentleman —a good Air—good Teeth (*grinning*)—and good Assurance.

Julia. (*to Mr. Fitzherbert*) Doesn't his list, Sir, want—good-manners?

Pen. Oh no, Madam; if you had said—good taste, it would have been nearer; but, even that is unnecessary. He can get his friends to furnish his table, his house, his books, and his pictures, and he can learn, by heart, to criticise them;—nothing is so

easy as to criticise—at least as far as finding Fault goes—the dullest people do it continually.

Fitz. You see, Mr. Pendragon has Information, Julia!—I'll leave you a few moments, that he may display his mind to advantage; and remember, Julia, what I now say to you—if you do not feel happy in the idea of marriage with the man I, of all others, have wished to see your husband, you lose me. (*Apart to Pendragon.*—Keep it up with Spirit! I'll wait for you below.)—(*Aside*) Now shall Disobedience and Impertinence correct each other! [*Exit.*

Pen. (*Aside.*—Now, to strike her with my superior *Ease!*) So, Miss, your Guardian, I think, has a mind that we shall—marry, to speak in plain language.

Julia. Well Sir; but are you not in great Anxiety at your supposed approach to such a state! Do you know what ought to be the Character of a Husband?

Pen. Aye! Do you know what ought to be that of a Wife?

Julia. I guess that to your wife will belong Ill-humour with you at home—Shame with you abroad; in her Face, forced Smiles, in her Heart—hidden Torture.

Pen. Whu! You have found your tongue, Ma'am! Oh, I shall have a fine time on't I guess, when we are married.

Julia. Married!—Pray, Sir, awake not the idea.—Were it possible for me to become your wife, I should be the most wretched of women!

Pen. Oh no you wouldn't—you would be as well off as many!

Julia. Unfeeling man! Would *you* presume to enter into a state, to the Happiness of which union of soul, delicacy of sentiment, and all the elegant attentions of polished manners, are indispensable?

Pen. What's all that! Union of Soul—Sentiment—Attentions—Manners!—I'm sure, that's not Life!

Julia. I am not able to conceive by what Witchcraft Mr. Fitzherbert has been insensible of the weak-

ness of your head, and the want of feeling in your heart! I am under the necessity of requesting you to tell him, Sir, that there is not a fate I would not prefer to that of being united to a man, whose vice is the effect of folly, and whose folly is as hateful almost as his vice. [*Exit.*

Pen. Yes, yes, I'll go and tell, depend on't! She's a spirit!—So much the better, more Pleasure in taming her! A meek wife cheats a man of opportunities of exercising his Authority, and deprives him of the proud pleasure of *exacting* Obedience. Let me see—Vice—Folly—Impudence—Ignorance---Ignorance too! [*Exit.*

Re-enter JULIA.

Julia. What have I done! I dare not now see my Guardian after his very serious threat. I am under Promise to my Belville not to reveal our marriage until his arrival—but persecution by a Lover during his absence is not to be endured, it will degrade him and me if persevered in!—I must discover some mode of avoiding it.—Oh, where art thou Belville! arrive and shield thy unhappy Bride.—(*muses*) What step can I take!

Enter KITTY.

Kitty. Dear Ma'am, I'm so grieved to see you so unhappy! If I had such a cross Guardian, I'd run away from him.

Julia. Alas! that thought was, this instant, presenting itself to my mind. Have you not told me that some relation of your's has Lodgings?

Kitty. Yes Ma'am; the most elegantest in London.

Julia. I dont want elegant apartments; but I wish for a short time to be concealed in some family of Reputation.

Kitty. To be sure, Ma'am, 'tis the most prudent thing you can do.

Julia. And yet—my Heart fails me!

Kitty. Oh, dont give yourself time to hesitate! I'll go and pack up a few things, and call a Coach; to save all disagreeables, we'll be off before Lady Bell comes from Court.

Julia. I fear 'tis a wrong step; and yet, what other can I take? The destruction of my Fortunes I am obliged to conceal from Mr. Fitzherbert for the present, lest he should be the more anxious for a Marriage he might deem to be therefore the more prudent.

Kitty. Oh, Ma'am, you are quite right—pray let's be off without any of *his* interferences! (*Aside.* Or you'll never reach Lord Sparkle's!)

Julia. (*Aside.* Bound as I am, by promise to my Husband, not to reveal our marriage before his arrival, until then I can only thus avoid both the Importunities of my Guardian, and the Addresses of a Lover—the Honour of Belville would be insulted should I permit them to be repeated!) [*Exit.*

Kitty. There's some other Mystery I find. So there should be! If Ladies had not Mysteries, their service would hardly be worth keeping.—I have Mysteries too; she shall have their Explanation from Lord Sparkle! [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

CLARINDA'S HOUSE.

Enter Lady BELL, *meeting* CLARINDA.

Lady Bell. Ha! ha! what an *embarras!* My dear creature, driving swiftly through the streets, Lady Flare dashed upon us in her Phaeton and Four, and, giving a monstrous big Newmarket word to my poor Fellows, with infinite dexterity entangled the traces.

It happened near your door, so I have taken shelter with you, and left her Ladyship to settle the dispute with my Coachman, ha! ha!—But, why were you not at Court to day?

Clar. I had a teazing head-ache.—But, pray, tell me what happened there. (*Aside.* Heighho! she looks as well as ever!)

Lady B. The Ladies, as usual, brilliant! but nothing so flat as the Men! The horrid english custom ruins them for Conversation with us. They make themselves Members of Clubs in the way of Business, and Members of Parliament in the way of Amusement; any Wit the creatures have is reserved for the Parliament, and all their Wisdom for the Club!

Clar. 'Tis better in Paris.

Lady B. At least, 'tis quite another thing. Whilst our men absurdly copy the Follies of the Parisians, they omit what you and I must think the more tolerable part of their Character. In their assiduity to acquire Elegance, the Parisians catch their Opinions and their *Bon Mots* from the Ladies. 'Tis in the Drawing-Room of Madame the Dutchess that the Marquis learns his Politics; whilst the sprightly Countess dispenses Taste and Philosophy to a Circle of their Bishops Generals and Statesmen!

Clar. I am mistaken, however, if you have not found one Englishman to reconcile you to the manners of the rest! Lord Sparkle, for instance; your Ladyship thinks, I am sure, that Wit is at all times within his reach.

Lady B. Oh yes, always! his Wit, like his Essence-Bottle, is a skilful *Collection* of all that is poignant; he has recourse to both alike, when he feels that he is vapid himself!

Clar. With such Sentiments, I wonder you can suffer his Addresses!

Lady B. Oh, I tolerate them—at least for a time; the man is so much the Fashion—and I am so much

envied: why you my dear are enclined to stick a poisoned Nosegay in my bosom.

Clar. Ha! ha! ha!—ridiculous! Believe me, Lady Bell, I shall neither prepare a Bouquet, nor, to signalize your nuptials, like her of old—invoke a fiery shower.

Lady B. (*Aside.* No your shower would be *tears* I fancy.—Here he comes!)

Clar. Ah! Lord Sparkle!—Your Ladyship's *accident* was fortunate! (*Sneering.*)

Enter Lord SPARKLE.

Spark. Lady Bell—your horses fly! they are Venus's Doves metamorphosed. I followed you from St. James's; but my poor earth-born cattle couldn't keep pace.

Clar. Oh, dont complain! If her Ladyship flies for a time, you see she stops for you at last!

Spark. Charming Miss Belmour, what an enlivening intimation! Where was your Ladyship on Friday? You would have found excellent food for Satire at Mrs. Olio's: We had all the Law-Ladies from Lincoln's Inn Fields; a dozen Satins from Bishopsgate; with the Wives and Daughters of half the M.D.'s and L.L.D.'s in Town.

Lady B. Oh, my entertainment was quite as good as yours! We were in Brook Street, at Lady Laurel's, and found her surrounded by her Literati of all denominations.—We had Masters of Art, and Misses of Science: on one hand there was an Essayist, now and then associated with a Moralist. There a Poetaster, here a Translator;—in that Corner a Philosopher, in the other a Writer of Romances.—Tropes, Epigrams, and Syllogisms flew off like Sky-Rockets in every direction; till the ambition of pre-eminence inflaming Controversy, they gave each other the lie literary with infinite Spirit!

Spark. Excellent! I'll repeat it every word, where the Satire will be enjoyed.

Clar. Then your Lordship may safely enter every door in the street—Satire is every where welcomed.

Lady B. Why yes—if it raise a Laugh; tis that is its Zest. They say we are fond of mere Satire; rob it of its Laugh, 'twould soon be banished to the second table, for the amusement of Butlers and Cambermaids.

Spark. Then some of our acquaintance would slide to the second table—to partake with the servants of the most relishing fare.

[*Enter* SERVANT *gives Lord Sparkle a Letter. Exit.*

Spark. (*Reading, aside.*)—Julia! astonishing! So sudden in your movements Mistress Kitty!—(*turning.*) This vulgar thing called Business is the greatest Evil in life; it intrudes on our most brilliant hours, and is fit only for Younger Brothers, and humble Cousins. Miss Belmour—I must tear myself away! Shall I attend your Ladyship to your Carriage?

Lady B. If you please. Miss Belmour—"I must tear myself away!" but, you'll shine upon us at night.

[*Exit with Lord Sparkle.*

Clar. Shine upon you at night! I know you are insolent enough to believe that impossible.—What am I to think of her Sentiments for Lord Sparkle? Sometimes I believe it is a mere attachment of Vanity on both sides. That reserved creature Beauchamp is in his Confidence; but he leaves Town this very day, and I shall have no opportunity of conversing with him.—(*Muses.*)—There is one Chance—going to visit him! but, how can I possibly do that?—I'll pretend a Whim to look at his Library; those who have obtained nothing else are the likeliest men to be found to possess Books!—Go however I will; and, if I cant invent an excuse, I'll put a good face upon the matter, and leave my excuse to Chance—To be bold, is sometimes to be right! [*Exit.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I. AN APARTMENT AT LADY BELL'S.

Enter Lady BELL, *followed by her Maid.*

Lady B. Miss Manners gone out in a Hackney Coach, and no message left!

Maid. None, my Lady.

Lady B. Very strange!

Maid. Mr. Beauchamp has been waiting nearly an hour for your Ladyship's return.

Lady B. Here, unfold and scent this handkerchief (*Exit Maid.*) Now—shall I admit him or not? this formal Waiting looks very like formal business—and I hate that! I suppose he has at length vanquished his Timidity, and is come to tell me that—that—Well I vow I wont hear him!—Yes, I will;—I long to know the Stile in which these serious men make Love.—But, to what Imprudence would my Heart betray me? Yet, I may surely indulge myself in repressing his love—in hearing, probably for the first time, its genuine language. (*Enter Maid, and presents the handkerchief*) Tell Mr. Beauchamp I am here. (*Exit Maid*) Now, how shall I receive him? It will be intolerable to be formal. (*Takes her fan, and walks up and down the room, singing a few notes*)—

Enter BEAUCHAMP.

Oh, Mr. Beauchamp, your Call is fortunate! I have had ten disputes to day about the figures on my fan, and you shall decide. Is that beautiful Nymph a flying Daphne, or an Atalanta?

Beauch. (*looking at her fan*) From the Terror of her averted eye, and the eagerness of her step, it must be a Daphne. I think Atalanta's head would be more at variance with her feet; and, whilst she flies, her eye would be turned on her pursuer.

Lady B. Yes—there does want a glance, to be sure.

Beauch. What a misfortune to a Lover! I know one, to whom you are the disdainful Daphne. How happy! could he behold in your eye the less extreme dislike of Atalanta's.

Lady B. (*Aside*) Mercy! for so reserved a man, that's pretty plain.

Beauch. This is probably the last visit I can make you, before I leave England. Will your Ladyship permit me before my departure to acquaint you, that there is one—whose happiness depends on your favour? (*Agitated.*)

Lady B. (*Aside.*—So, now he's going to be perplexing again!—about to quit the country immediately!)—One whose happiness depends on me, Mr. Beauchamp! (*looking on her fan.*)

Beauch. Yes!—and—and—(*Aside.* I cannot go on. Why did I accept a commission in which Success would destroy me?)

Lady B. (*Aside.*) How evidently this is the first time he ever made Love! The man seems to have chosen a very diffident Advocate in you, Sir.

Beauch. 'Tis more than diffidence, Madam,—my task is painful.

Lady B. I thought so! You have taken a Brief in a cause you dont like; I could plead it better myself.

Beauch. I feel the reproach.

Lady B. Your difficulty perhaps arises from speaking in the third person; try it now, by way of *Whim*, in the first. Suppose now, ha! ha! only suppose, I say, *you* were the person in love—and then try how you can plead!

Beauch. (*kneeling*) Thus—thus would I plead; and swear, that thou art dear to my heart as Fame and Honour! To look at thee is Rapture; to love thee—though without Hope—felicity!

Lady B. (*Aside.*) Oh! Oh! brought out at last!

Beauch. rising. (*Aside.* To what dishonesty have I been betrayed!) Thus speaks—my Friend through my lips;—'tis thus *he* pleads his passion.

Lady B. (*Aside.*—Provoking!) What friend Sir is weak enough, to use the language of another to explain his heart?

Beauch. Lord Sparkle.

Lady B. Lord Sparkle! Was it for him you knelt? (*he bows*) Then, Sir, I must inform you that the Liberty you have taken——(*Aside.* Oh! how do I betray myself!) Tell me Sir, on your honour, do you *wish* to succeed in pleading the passion of Lord Sparkle?

Beauch. (*hesitating*) My—obligations to his Lordship—our Relationship—the Confidence he has reposed in me—

Lady B. Stop, Sir, I too will repose Confidence in you! Though—perhaps—there is one whom I sometimes suspect not to be indifferent to me—it is not Lord Sparkle. Tell him so;—and tell him—that—tell him (*agitated*)—what you will!

Beauch. (*Aside.*) Heaven! what means this? What language is this her Agitation speaks!

Lady B. If, Sir, you join my Party this evening, you may see me in the presence of him—for whom *my* heart feels—perhaps—some preference—

[*He bows, goes to the door, returns, advances towards her, makes a vain effort to speak, bows, and retires.*

What persuasion in that bashful irresolution! what necessity have Lovers for Words? Now—shall I let him quit England or not? What! give up a Coronet and Lord Sparkle—for an Epaulette and Beauchamp—preposterous! says Vanity. But—what says Love? I dont exactly know; but, I'll examine their separate claims, and settle them—with all the casuistry of four-and-twenty. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

A ROOM IN LORD SPARKLE'S HOUSE.

Enter JULIA *and* KITTY.

Julia. I am so agitated with this rash step, that—I hardly breathe! (*throwing herself into a chair.*) Why did you confirm me in my imprudent resolution?

Kitty. Imprudent! I'm sure, Ma'am, 'tis very prudent and very right that a young Lady should not be snubbed, and have her inclination thwarted by an ill-natured positive old Guardian.

Julia. (*looking round*) What Apartments! and the Hall we came through had an air much beyond a Lodging-House! 'Tis all too fine for my purpose, I want to be private.

Kitty. O dear Ma'am, you may live as private here as you please. (*A rapping at the door*) There's my Cousin come home, I dare say. [*Exit.*

Julia. I feel I have done wrong, and yet, I was so distracted by my various difficulties, I know not how I could have done otherwise—

Enter Lord SPARKLE.

What means this—Lord Sparkle here!

Spark. Yes, my lovely Julia, here I am; and, if

you knew the engagement I have broken for this happiness, you would really feel gratified.

Julia. Gratified! I can feel only astonished—equally so at your being here, and at your strange Address!

Spark. Astonished at my being here? To be sure it is not usual to find a man of fashion in his own house; but, when I heard you were in my house, how could I do less than fly home?—How you chanced to come, at this particular time, has not been explained to me.

Julia. Home!—Your own house! what can all this mean?

Spark. Mean?—Love!

Julia. Oh! I am betrayed! Where is my depraved servant?

Spark. Think no more of her. Why all this flutter my sweet Girl? You have only changed Guardians; and shall find that being Ward to a young man of Fashion and—

Julia. Heaven! Shield me from this Insolence—

Spark. Nay, this is ridiculous—after having recourse to my Mansion! Honoured thus by your Confidence I will take care to deserve—

Julia. Why do I remain here an Instant?—

[*Going towards the door.*

Spark. (*holding her.*) This is downright Rudeness. You young Ladies are so fickle! Be assured that, after having thus honoured my house, I shall not be so inattentive as to suffer you to seek another.

Julia. Wretched Artifice! You know that your house, and you, I should have fled from to the furthest corner of—

Enter BEAUCHAMP.

Oh Mr. Beauchamp—save me! I have been basely betrayed hither.

Beauch. Betrayed! Miss Manners! Madam, I will protect you at every hazard.

Spark. Come, none of your antique virtues George pray! This is the *badinage* of the present century, and you cant possibly understand it. Miss Manners chose to pay me a Visit, and I desire you'll leave us.

Julia. My Lord! how presume you thus to trifle with a woman's honour!

Beauch. Be not alarmed, Madam, I will defend you.

Spark. (*taking him aside*) Poh, prithee, George, be discreet. This is all female artifice—a Salvo for her Reputation.

Beauch. Pardon me, my Lord—in believing you, in opposition to the evidence of this young Lady's Terrors, I may be guilty of an irremediable error.

Spark. Nay, if you are serious---Sir—how venture you to break in upon my privacy?

Beauch. This is not a time fully to explain that to you, my Lord. The Task you imposed upon me I now feel indebted to; I should not but for that have prevented your base designs!

Spark. Base designs?—Mr. Beauchamp!

Beauch. Yes! Lord Sparkle. Shall I attend you home, Madam?

Julia. Oh, Sir, I dare not go thither! I fled from Lady Bell's when I was betrayed into this inhuman being's power. Convey me to some place, where I may have Leisure to reflect.

Spark. And do you think Mr. Beauchamp, I shall put up with this!—remember Sir—

Beauch. Yes, my Lord, that, as a MAN, it is my Duty to protect endangered Innocence; that, as a SOLDIER, it is a part of the essence of my Character; and that, whilst I am grateful to you for the Commission I have the Honour to bear, I ought not to disgrace it by suffering myself to be intimidated by your frowns. [*Exit* BEAUCHAMP, *leading* JULIA.

Spark. So!—so!—so!—an antient Hero in the

house of a modern Man of Fashion! Alexander, in the tent of Darius!—The fellow's Morals are of the date of the Olympiads.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Mr. Pendragon and his Sister, my Lord.

Spark. Pshaw—who! (*with an air of Disgust.*)

Serv. Mr. and Miss Pendragon.

Spark. Carry them to the Housekeeper's room, give them Jellies and Plumb-cake, and tell them—

Enter PENDRAGON, *leading* SOPHY.

(*runs up to her*) Oh, my dear Miss Pendragon (*in a tone of great pleasure*) you honour me!—But, I am the most unlucky man on earth! I am obliged, on business of infinite importance, to be at Whitehall within five minutes.

Pen. But, first, my Lord, you must settle a little business *here*, with Miss Pendragon.

Sophy. I tell you, Bob, I'll speak for myself; and, as few words are best,—pray, my Lord, what do you mean by treating me in this manner?

Spark. I shall be miserable—beyond bearing—if any treatment of mine has incurred your displeasure!

Sophy. Well, now you talk of being miserable, you have lighten'd my heart at once. But, pray my Lord, is it fashionable for people, engaged as we are, never to see each other?

Spark. (*aside*) What can the Girl mean?

Sophy. Never even write! no Billets! no bribing the maid to slip notes into my hand! Why, though 'tis five days since you saw me—you dont even complain.

Spark. Complain! I'm sure I have been exceedingly wretched.

Sophy. Then why did you not write me so? Why

that's the very thing I wanted. Why did you not comfort me, by letting me know that you were wretched?

Pen. I see, by all this, I shall lose an Opportunity here.—I came to challenge you my Lord!

Spark. Challenge me!

Pen. Yes; Miss Pendragon told me she was dissatisfied—then says I, I'll demand Satisfaction! And I didn't care if the Quarrel had gone a little further; for, to call out a Lord would be a feather in my cap as long as I live.—However, you're agreed.

Sophy. Do be quiet Bob!—we're not agreed. I've heard nothing of the Lawyers and Settlements yet—nor of the Jewels.

Spark. My dear Ma'am, you are pleased to amuse yourself!

Sophy. Why, my Lord, you know, those things must be arranged before hand.

Spark. Before what?

Sophy. What! why before our Marriage, to be sure.

Spark. Marriage—ridiculous! ha! ha! ha!

Sophy. Hey-dey—what—do you pretend that you did not intend to marry me! I can prove that you courted me from twenty instances.

Spark. Indeed!

Pen. Aye, that she can! instances as glaring as the splendor of your Lordship's dress. Come Miss Pendragon—your proofs. I'll support them, whatever they are!

Sophy. Why, in the first place, my Lord, you once gave me a Nosegay for my bosom, and said—"Oh! I wish I were these happy Roses!"—the very speech that Sir Harry Hargrave made to Miss Woodville!—Another time you said—"You are a bewitching and adorable Girl!"—exactly what Colonel Finch said to Lady Lucy Lustre.—Another time you said—"How would a Coronet become those brilliant tresses"—the very speech that Lord Rose-

hill made to Miss Danvers; and these couples were, every one, married!

Spark. Pray who are they all? I never heard of them! In what Region do they live?

Pen. Live! Why (*strutting up to him*) in our County to be sure!

Sophy. No, no, Bob, in "The Constant Lovers" and "Roderick Random," and "Sir Charles Grandison."

Pen. At Random Sir with Sir Charles Grandison! do you know them now?

Spark. Ha! Ha! you would be an excellent little Lawyer Sophy; for you argue but by Precedent! And your precedents you might perhaps establish to all future times, if Grandison were on the Bench; but, though fit for nothing else, I never heard of Sir Charles being made a Judge.

Pen. What! not bring your Proofs from real fashionable Life?—And were you such a fool all along, that you did not understand what we call—*Common-Place!*

Sophy. Common Place!

Pen. Yes, we of elegant life are permitted to indulge in the Figure—Hyperbole!

Sophy. Why, what's a Hyperbole!

Pen. Why, that is as much as to say a—Stretch!

Sophy. What!—all a mere Stretch! Then, my Lord you have only been making your Mock of me? (*weeping.*)

Spark. Not in the least; I shall be the happiest man in existence always—(*Aside.* I must take care of my Phrases!)—to render myself worthy of any Interest—I mean, that I shall always, and upon all occasions, be *tres humblement votre Serviteur!*—(*Aside.*)—Were there ever two such Bumpkins!

[*Exit.*

Sophy. What, is he gone? Oh! Monster, Villain! I am forsaken—I am rejected! (*crying.*)—Oh! all Cornwall shall know it!

Pen. All the Mines shall echo with it! But, dont ye cry, Miss Pendragon, dont ye cry!

Sophy. Is this his Gratitude for getting his friend a Borough! Bob, you told more lies for him in five weeks, than you need have told in your own affairs in five years. And I myself introduced him to the Miss Coulters, and their Sweethearts would have got him twice as many Votes as he wanted.—Oh! the ungrateful man—I'm rejected!

Pen. I'm glad on't with all my Heart! for now I can challenge him! And they wont know in Cornwall exactly how it was; they'll hear that a Lord fought and so forth! and, whether for like or dislike of ye, no matter—as long as it was about ye!

Sophy. But, will you challenge him really Bob?

Pen. Upon Honour! I admire the Claw of the thing!—Soph, I'm glad he has forsaken thee—for now my character will be finished. A man isn't quite established in Company, till he has stood a shot, and fired his pistol in the Air!

Sophy. In the air! If you dont fire it *through* him—

Pen. Oh, never fear, I'll do all that sort of thing in a high stile. Come along—I'll home directly, and practise at the Hen-Coop in the yard, and to-morrow morning I'll challenge him.—I'll fire through one end, and you shall hold your Parasol at the other, and, if I dont hit—say I'm no Marksman.

[*Exit, with* SOPHY *under his arm.*

SCENE III.

BEAUCHAMP'S LODGINGS.

Enter BEAUCHAMP *and* JULIA.

Beauch. I entreat your pardon—I have only been able to conduct you to my own Lodgings, which I

surrender to you. Here, Madam, you will be safe, until you determine how to act.—What are your commands to me?

Julia. Oh, Mr. Beauchamp, I have no commands—I have no prospects!—I have been very imprudent—I am still more unhappy.

Beauch. Shall I acquaint Mr. Fitzherbert?

Julia. It was to avoid him that I left Lady Bell.—I have reasons that make it impossible to see Mr. Fitzherbert now.

Beauch. Is there no other friend?

Julia. Oh,—I have *one* friend! Were he here, all my difficulties would vanish——Ah! how am I exposed!—here is Company! 'Tis Miss Belmour, the last woman on earth whom I would trust!—where can I go?

Beauch. Miss Belmour—most surprising! But pray, be not uneasy—the back drawing-room, if you will condescend. (*She hastens through the door.*)

Enter CLARINDA *laughing.*

Clar. Ha! ha! I expect your Gravity will be amazingly discomposed at so hardy a visit; but, I took it very ill that you did not design to call upon me before your departure; and so I stopped, in passing, to send for you to my Carriage door to enquire the cause, but, hearing you had Company—I thought I might venture up. Bless me—where are they?

Beauch. Oh, you was misinformed—but—but—I'm thankful for the delusion which has procured me this Honour.

Clar. Oh, your most obedient! But—(*looks round with anxiety*) You are going to leave England for a long while! You'll find many in different situations probably on your return.—Your friend Lord Sparkle for instance; I am informed he is really to marry Lady Bell—but I dont believe it—do you?

Beauch. 'Tis impossible, Madam, for me—

Clar. Impossible! oh, such friends as you are, I suppose, keep nothing from one another.—We Women cant exist without a *Confidante;* and, I dare say you men are full as communicative. Not that it is any thing to me! but, as I have a prodigious regard for Lady Bell—

Belv. (*without*) Beauchamp! Beauchamp!

Clar. Oh! I am the nicest creature breathing in my reputation—Here is some man—what will he think—I'll run into this room.

(*runs towards the door.*)

Beauch. (*preventing her*) Pardon me, Madam, you cannot enter there.

Clar. (*pushing the door*) I must—oh—oh! the door is held. I should not have been in this distressful situation, Sir, if I had not heard of your company, but—*I* am to endure exposure, to protect one who ought perhaps to be exposed.

Beauch. My dear Madam, I am infinitely sorry for the accident; but suppose—Madam—I say—that a friend of mine has been in a duel, and concealed in that room.

Clar. Ridiculous! I saw the corner of a Lady's gown—is that the dress of your fighting friends?—So! 'tis too late!

Enter BELVILLE.

Belv. So! so! I beg pardon. How could you be so indiscreet Beauchamp? Though a young Soldier, I thought you knew enough of Generalship to be prepared for a Surprise.

Clar. Oh! he was, for one, but not for two surprises. One has happened already—and a hasty Retreat the consequence.

Beauch. Believe me Belville - - - (*To Clarinda*).—I am infinitely concerned.

Clar. Oh keep your impertinent concern for the Lady in the other room Sir.

Belv. A Lady in the other room too! Hey-dey! Beauchamp, who would have suspected—

Beauch. 'Tis all a mistake—the Lady in the other room—But prithee go!

Belv. Only tell me whether you have seen Fitzherbert? I have been seeking him this hour on business of the utmost consequence.

Beauch. I have not; but, about this time you'll find him at home.

Belv. Enough.—Miss Belmour, pray suffer no uneasiness; depend on my honour. Beauchamp (*taking him aside*) who is the Lady in the other room?

Beauch. Had I meant that to be known, a retreat would have been unnecessary. (*Belville seems still inquisitive, and continues drawing him to the side.*)

Clar. Now do I die to know who it can be. Indeed it is necessary for my own sake. Whilst she has been hid, I have been exposed; and who knows what the creature may say, if she is not silenced? I'll try once more. She has my secret, and I'll have her's. (*forces open the door.*)

Julia. (*rushes out*) Belville! (*running towards him.*)

Belv. Julia! (*starting back.*)

Clar. Ha! ha! Miss Manners!

Julia. Oh Belville, throw me not from you!

Belv. Distraction!

Clar. Charming! The modest Julia, and the reserved Beauchamp—ha! ha! ha! But, Mr. Belville, how came you of this sober party?

Julia. Listen to me, Belville—

Clar. Now Mr. Beauchamp, you know the real object of my visit. I had heard that Miss Manners had been seen to visit you and, not being willing to trust merely to report, was resolved, if possible, to ascertain the Truth.

Belv. (*to Julia*) Wretched Woman!

Julia. Barbarous! hear me I conjure you!

Belv. Hear you! No Madam—and, if my Contempt—my Hatred—my—*You*, Sir, I must speak to

in another place—yet! perhaps you were not acquainted that I am—What would I say!—The word which I have pronounced with Rapture—now choaks me in the utterance. From this moment (*to Julia*) Farewell! [*Exit.*

Beauch. What can I think of all this?

Julia. Oh! Mr. Beauchamp.

Beauch. Permit me, Madam to ask—whether you have been long acquainted with Mr. Belville?

Julia. Yes, too long!

Clar. Aye, young Ladies should be cautious how they form acquaintance. For my part—but you look ill child—(*taking her hand*) Well, I have no hard heart—I wont upbraid you now. My Carriage waits—shall I conduct you home?

Julia. Yes, to Lady Bell—to Lady Bell!

Clar. Adieu! Mr. Beauchamp. This has been an unlucky frolic.—'Tis amazing you grave people can be so careless. [*Exeunt Julia and Clarinda.*

Beauch. An unlucky frolic, indeed! And, I am so thoroughly confounded that I know not what Judgment to form of the adventure. I always considered Miss Manners as a pattern of delicacy and virtue; nor dare I now, spite of circumstances, think otherwise—the strength of her Character supports her!

Enter Lord SPARKLE.

Spark. So, so! Signor Quixote—what, so soon lost your prize! Aye, better assault the windmills, than defend these women of Character.—Have you seen Lady Bell, in my behalf?

Beauch. Lady Bell, my Lord! Why, surely, 'tis impossible after your conduct to Miss Manners—

Spark. Pshaw! that is a hit in my favour. She will be the better pleased with his devoirs whom another has found dangerous. What did you discover of her sentiments towards me?

Beauch. I meant to have given the intelligence softened; but, the various agitations I have gone through make it impossible; I must therefore inform you, in few words—Lady Bell Bloomer's choice is made; but has not fallen on your Lordship.

Spark. Then, I must inform you, in three words, that—you are mistaken. But, your reasons, Sir, your reasons?

Beauch. Her Ladyship furnished me with a decisive one: she acknowledged a pre-engagement of her heart—and added that I should see her in the presence of the man her heart prefers—if *I* visited her this evening.

Spark. (*Laughing violently.*) Excellent!—charming Ingenuity! Ha! ha! ha! the kindest, softest, message that ever woman framed; and you, like the sheep loaden with the golden fleece, bore it insensible of its value. Ha! ha! ha! You dont see the pretty Artifice?

Beauch. No, really.

Spark. Why—'tis *I* who am to be there—by particular Invitation! You'll see her in *my* presence; and this is her pretty mysterious way of covertly informing me that, *I* am the object of her choice.

Beauch. Indeed!

Spark. Without a doubt! but, you deep people are the dullest fellows at a hint!—a man of half your wisdom would see it.—But *I* am satisfied;—and shall go to her Rout in the most brilliant Spirits! You shall come, and see my Triumph confirmed, see the lovely Widow—in the presence of the man her heart prefers! [*Exit.*

Beauch. Vanity! how didst thou construe her sweet Confusion!—Is Lord Sparkle right?—this night decides! Narrowly will I watch each Tone and Look to discover who it is—Oh ever blest! whom her heart prefers. [*Exit.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

Scene I. AN APARTMENT AT LADY BELL'S.

A Table with Candles.—Enter Lady Bell, *and* Servant.

Lady B. Are the Tables placed in the Inner Rooms?

Serv. Yes, my Lady, all but the Pharaoh Table.

Lady B. Carry that in too. I positively will not have a Table in the outer room. (Exit *Servant*) Those who play visit the card-tables, not me; and, where they find them is very immaterial.——Hey-dey!—

Enter Clarinda, *and* Julia.

Why Julia! where can you have been?

Clar. Aye, that's a circumstance you would not have known, but for an accident; I am very sorry it fell to my lot to make the discovery.

Lady B. (*taking Julia's hand*)—Speak my Love!

Julia. Miss Belmour will tell you all she knows.—I am too wretched!

Clar. Nay, I know very little;—I can tell what I saw indeed.—Having received Intimations, not quite consonant to one's notions of Decorum, I pretended a Frolic and called on Mr. Beauchamp, and there I found this Lady—concealed!

Lady B. Julia!—'tis impossible.

Clar. Discoveries relating to another Gentleman had nearly been made too; but, Miss Manners may explain them herself—for I see your rooms begin to fill. I shall report that your Ladyship is a little indisposed, as an excuse for your not immediately appearing. [*Exit.*

Lady B. (*with a look of terror*) Julia! you at Mr. Beauchamp's!

Julia. Lady Bell, though the result of my rash conduct has been that I was indeed found at Mr. Beauchamp's, I am not the guilty wretch you imagine.—I am married!—I will no longer conceal it.

(*bursting into tears.*)

Lady B. Married! Oh Heaven! (*Throws herself into a chair, and turns from Julia.*)

Julia. I was prevented from revealing it to my Guardian, by a promise to my husband; and, to avoid importunities, fled from your house.

Lady B. Oh Julia, and you are married! What self-destruction have I nourished! But, forgive me!—You knew not—alas! I knew not myself, till this moment, how much Beauchamp—

Julia. My dearest Madam, do not add to my Afflictions—for indeed they are severe.

Lady B. Why was your marriage—unkind Girl! concealed from me?

Julia. Oh! is it destined that one imprudent step is to deprive me of every blessing? In Agony I flew to your friendship, and you destroy me with reproaches.

Lady B. And, by your want of confidence in me, you have destroyed me! Ah, Julia! had you revealed—

Julia. Oh—I am sure you will feel with me that I dared not; for when I was prevailed upon to give my hand to Mr. Belville—

Lady B. (*eagerly*) Mr. Belville!—Mr. Belville did you say!

Julia. Yes. It was in Paris we were married.

Lady B. (*Aside.* So, so, so! what an interesting Mistake have I made!—But, tell-tale Heart! compose thyself,—for, it is a Mistake!) - - - And so, my sweet Julia is married!—married in Paris! Sly thing!—But, how came you at Mr. Beauchamp's my Love?

Julia. In my rash flight this Morning, my abandoned Servant betrayed me into Lord Sparkle's

house. There, Mr. Beauchamp snatch'd me from Insult, and gave me up his Lodgings as a temporary Asylum until—

Lady B. Did Beauchamp! - - - (*Aside.* Ah! cannot he do right, but my Heart must triumph?)

Julia. At Mr. Beauchamp's my Husband found me! and found me hid with so suspicious a Secrecy! —Ah! here comes Mr. Fitzherbert—how can I see him?

Enter FITZHERBERT.

Fitz. My Julia!—my dear Julia!

Julia. Oh Sir!—I dread—

Fitz. Come—I know all!—and, to relieve one cause of your distress, inform you that the faithless Agent is seized with nearly the whole of your property, and to relieve the other will tell you that the Lover I shocked you with to day, was only my instrument in the little revenge I had resolved to take for your having married, without thinking my Consent necessary, the very man for whom, as it chances, all my cares designed you.

Julia. (*clasping his hand.*) Is it possible!

Fitz. At the moment he left Paris for Florence, you received my directions to return home; thus Belville's Letters from Italy missed you, and, by his arriving here, he received no information that you was in London.

Julia. Oh Sir! had you revealed this to me this morning, what Evils should I have escaped?

Fitz. My dear Girl, I decreed you but a little punishment; your own rashness in withdrawing yourself, and leaving me in ignorance of your distress through the villainy of your father's Agent, have occasioned you a severer portion than you had deserved.

Lady B. My dear Julia, I sincerely congratulate you! But, where is the Bridegroom? I long to see

the Necromancer, whose Spells could melt a Vestal's heart—in the chill regions of a Convent.

Fitz. He is without; satisfied from the mouth of Beauchamp concerning your Conduct (*to Julia*)—and impatient to fold his Julia to his heart.

Julia. Oh Sir, support me to him!—To be forgiven by you, and to find my Husband to lay my Fortune at his feet, are felicities almost too great.

[*Exit. Led by Fitzherbert.*

Lady B. What a Discovery has Julia's adventure made to me of my own Heart! I doubted whether it had any passion but the desire of Conquest—or any motive for admiration but Vanity; but, the pang of Jealousy indeed proves to me—that all its sense is Love! [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

SUITE OF ROUT ROOMS.

Numerous Card Parties seen in Inner Rooms, beyond Folding Doors.

CLARINDA *in the outer room in front of the Stage with other Company, who, by degrees, all join the Card Parties in the Inner Rooms.*

A Lady enters.

Lady. I protest I have been three quarters of an hour getting from the top of the street to the door! But the Bustle without doors is more the object of a Lady in her Rout, than the Company within.

Clar. Oh, the Racket in the Street is frequently the pleasantest part of her Entertainment; to plague one's Neighbourhood is delightful! Ha! ha! ha! My next door neighbour, Mrs. Saffron, always wheels into the Country on my Public Nights—on pretence

of delicate Nerves; but, the truth is, her Rooms will hold but ten Card-tables—and mine nineteen.

Gent. I wish the Ladies would banish Cards from their Assemblies, and give us something in the nature of *Conversaziones.*

Clar. Oh! it wont do on this side the Channel; our Men in general have no knack at Conversation—they think too much to be able to talk. Good talkers never think—Sir Harry Glare, full of *Bon Mots*, never thinks—you Sir, I believe, never think!—Why! here comes Lord Sparkle's borough acquaintance—Mr. Pendragon.

Enter PENDRAGON, *extravagantly dressed.*

Pen. Bobs! Miss Belmour, how d'ye do? I didn't think to find you here. Fitzherbert told me I might come; I have been examining the other Ladies faces to see whether I knew any body; but, fine Ladies are so alike that I am puzzled to distinguish my acquaintance—red cheeks, white necks, and lips with, what we call in our County, the long Smile, croud every room.

Lady. Hey-dey! a natural curiosity! Pray Sir, how long have you been in the World?

Pen. How long! Just twenty years, last Lammas.

Lady. I dont enquire your Age! How long is it since you were caught?—you're an odd creature.

Pen. No, there are a pair of us—Sister and I. I've lost her somewhere in the Crowd (*looks round*). As ladies when they receive a Few hundred friends cant know all their acquaintance, I made bold to bring her here without an Invitation, as this may be her only opportunity of telling them in Cornwall all about a Rout. I shall have a slight fashionable affair upon my hands tomorrow, which may make it necessary for us to be off.

Lady. Fashion!—ha! ha!—Was you ever at a Rout before?

Pen. Aye, that I was, last week.—It beat this all to nothing! 'Twas at our Wine-Merchant's—not in the City, but at his Country house at Kentish Town; he sold us some Wine, and asked us to come.

Clar. Oh, how I wish I had been of your party—I should have enjoyed a Kentish-Town Rout!

Pen. Oh, you must have been pleased—The Rooms were so little, and the Company so large, that nothing was done—without the leave of all the rest; we were packed so close, that if one person stirred, all were obliged to obey the motion.

Clar. Delightful!—Well Sir—

Pen. We had all the notable Misses, managing Wives, and fat Widows who have Country Houses in the Parish. We had no Scandal—for *all* were there. At length, when the Assembly broke up, such Clattering and squeedging down the gangway staircase! whilst the little Footboy bawled up from the Passage—"*Miss Bobbin's Bonnet is ready*"—"*Mrs. Spudder's Lanthorn waits*"—"*Mrs. Jobson's Pattens stop the way!*"

Clar. Oh, you Creature, come with me! I must exhibit him through the rooms.

[*Clarinda and Pendragon, with others, withdraw into the other rooms.*

Lady. (*as they go*) Remember, I shall be at home on Wednesday, and I insist on you;—you shall receive a Card. He is really amusing—

Enter Lord SPARKLE, *down the rooms.*

But, hide your heads Beaus and Witlings!—here comes Lord Sparkle. [*Exit.*

Spark. (*speaking as he comes down*) With all my heart, provided the Belles dont hide their's.

Gent. Well my Lord—our circle have obeyed Summons; had you not pressed it we should not have been here. But, why so earnest?

Spark. To give *eclat* to my particular reception

here. This *fête* is given by Lady Bell to ME—and I expect your congratulations! Here comes the dear creature!

Lady BELL *comes down through the Rooms, into which all but Lord* SPARKLE *retire.*

Lady B. How d'ye do? How d'ye do? (*on each side*)—You wicked creature why did you disappoint me last night! Harriet I have not seen you this age! —Oh, Lord Sparkle—I have been detained by Mr. Fitzherbert, planning a Scheme for your amusement.

Spark. Indeed! I did not expect plans for my amusement from *him*—but, for the enchanting *Scheme* of the evening, I acknowledge my obligations to your Ladyship.

Lady B. (*Aside.*—That air of self possession, I fancy, would be incommoded, if you guessed at your coming entertainment)—Have you seen Mr. Beauchamp?

Spark. For a moment. But, charming Lady Bell (*taking her hand, and drawing her aside*) I shall make you expire with laughing. I really believe—ha! ha! ha!—the poor fellow explained your message in his own favour!

Lady B. Well!—did he?—ha! ha! ha!

Enter BEAUCHAMP, *from the rooms behind.*

Beauch. (*Aside.*) Ah!—'tis true! There they are, retired from the Crowd, enjoying the sweet converse of Lovers.

Lady B. See—there he is. I long to have a little *badinage* with him.

Spark. Oh, nothing can be more delightful!—“Hither, sighing Shepherd, come!”—Beauchamp, take one last—one lingering look!—shan't he, Lady Bell?

Lady B. Doubtless, with your Lordship's leave.

Spark. He seems astonished—ha! ha! ha!—Nay,

it is cruel! If the poor youth has the misfortune to be stricken, you know he cant resist Fate—Ixion sighed for Juno.

Lady B. And was punished too.—What Penalty, Mr. Beauchamp, shall we decree you?

Beauch. I am astonished! Was it for this your Ladyship commanded me to attend you?

Lady B. *How* did I command you? Do you remember the words?

Beauch. You bid me come—that I might behold you in the presence of the man your Heart prefers.

Lady B. Well—and—Sir—you see me!

Spark. Oh, the sweet Confusion of the enchanting Confession!

Beauch. Since you knew my heart, this Ostentation of felicity is ungenerous—and unworthy You. But, I am pleased I have witnessed it—I shall have a pang the less. (*Going.*)

Lady B. —Sir—do you set out instantly!

Beauch. This instant. I remained but in obedience to your Commands; my chaise is at your door, and, before your gay assembly breaks up I shall be far from London, and, in a day or two, from England. I probably now see your Ladyship for the last time. --- Farewell!

Lady B. Stay—Mr. Beauchamp—(*agitated.*)

Spark. Aye, prithee stay! I believe Lady Bell has a mind to make you give her away at the Wedding.

Beauch. I forgive You, my Lord. Excess of Happiness heightens frequently into Insolence;—the mind that is absorbed in felicity is unfeeling.—But, why should the humble passion which has so long consumed my life prompt you, my Lady, to this cruelty? I have not *insulted* you with my love; I have scarcely dared whisper it to myself; how then have I deserved—

Lady B. Mercy! dont be so grave! I am not insensible to your Merit, nor have I beheld your passion

with disdain. Lord Sparkle's Fashion—Elegance—

Spark. My dearest Lady Bell!—you overpower me—your Discernment!—thus I thank you for the distinguished Honour—(*kneeling to kiss her hand.*)

SOPHY *bursts in—crying.*

Sophy. Oh, you false hearted man!

Spark. (*starting up*) Hey-dey!

Sophy. Dont believe a word he says—for all you are so fine a Lady. He'll talk to you of his happiness, and miseries, and this, and that, and t'other, but—'tis all Common-place and Hyperbole and all that sort of thing! (*Crying.*)

Lady B. Indeed! What, has this young Lady prior claims on your Lordship?

Spark. Claims! Ha! ha! ha! Surely your Ladyship can answer that in a single Glance. Claims! is it my fault that a little Rustic does not know the Language of the day? Compliment is merely the particular Idiom of modern conversation, and every one, under penalty of disappointment must learn to appreciate its real import.

Enter PENDRAGON.

Pen. (*clapping him on the shoulder.*) Well my Lord, pray then teach me the Value of your Compliment, when you told me you would use your Influence to obtain me a Commission, and said—I should make quite a Figure in the Guards!

Spark. Ha! ha! ha! Value! Why just as much as it would bring! you yourself estimated it at Forty Votes, and now, strangely, can't comprehend its worth!

Enter FITZHERBERT *and* JULIA.

Fitz. But here, Lord Sparkle, is a Lady who claims

an explanation of a different kind. She had no Interest, to excite your Flatteries, yet you scrupled not to profess Love to her—whilst you were soliciting the hand of her friend in Marriage.

Julia. Fancy not, Lady Bell, that Lord Sparkle can be bound in the honorable chains of Marriage with you!

Spark. Mere malice Lady Bell—Fitzherbert's malice!—I never had a thought of seriously addressing Miss Manners in my life.

Enter BELVILLE.

Belv. What, my Lord! and have you to this Lady then dared talk of Love at all!

Spark. And, pray Sir, what right have you—

Belv. What you perhaps will deem trifling—the right of a Husband!

Spark. Your Wife!—my dear Belville (*runs up to him*) I give you Joy with all my Soul! You see the danger of keeping Secrets from your Friends. But, am I to be accused of any other crimes?—any more witnesses coming into Court?

Belv. No; but, I am now a witness in another cause. I accuse you of loading the mind of my friend Beauchamp with a sense of Obligation you had neither Spirit nor Justice to confer.

Lady B. A Commission, my Lord, sent him under a blank Cover, by one who could not bear to see his noble spirit dependent on your Caprice.

Belv. And, when his sense of claims on your Lordship pointed you out as his Benefactor, you accepted the honour—to lay heavy claims on his Gratitude.

Spark. Well, and what is there in all that? Beauchamp did not know to whom he was obliged; and would not it have been lamentable to let a good action run about the world belonging to nobody?—I found it a stray Orphan, and adopted it. But, you

I see Fitzherbert are the lawful owner; so prithee take it back, and thank me for patronizing it.

Fitz. Your affected Pleasantry, Lord Sparkle, though it shield you from Resentment, will not from Contempt. Your Effrontery—

Spark. Effrontery! Prithee make distinctions!—What in sober walks of life would be effrontery, in me is only—the Ease of fashion; that delightful something which enables me at this moment to stand serene amidst the storm you have raised around me. Come, my dear Lady Bell, we will leave these good Gentry; and love—amidst the delights of Fashion and the charms of high life. (*Tenders her his hand.*)

Lady B. (*Withdrawing her's*) Pardon me, my Lord! Caprice, you know, is one of the ingredients in the Character of a Fine Lady, so you will not be surprised if, in preference to your Elegance, Fashion, and Wit, I present my hand (*presents it*)—to this poor Soldier, who boasts *only*—Worth, Spirit, Honour, and Love!

Beauch. Madam!—be cautious—Feelings like mine are not to be trifled with! Once already the hopes you had inspired—

Lady B. The hour of Trifling is past; and surely it cannot appear extraordinary, that I prefer the internal worth of an uncorrupted heart, to outward polish—springing from a mind too feeble to support itself against Vice! I were indeed a Trifler, if, in so serious a moment, I could hesitate to declare—which is the man of my Heart!

Spark. What! your Ladyship too in the Plot?

Fitz. A Plot has existed longer than you, my Lord, conceive. As it is my misfortune that you are my nearest relation, it was my Duty to watch over your Conduct—and I have found you but a Gambler and a Libertine, unworthy the high Order to which you belong. I have seen your Plans generally tend to your Confusion and Disgrace; and many of them *I* have defeated, though you knew not the means.—But, what Fate does your Lordship design for these

young people, decoyed by you from their natural Station and Home?

Spark. Let them return to their natural station and Home as fast as they can.

Pen. No, no; hang me if I do that! I know Life now, and Life I'll have; Hyde-Park, Plays, Operas —and all that sort of affair for me!—But, Old Gentleman, perhaps *you'll* give me a Commission, as he wont. The Captain there cant want his now, suppose you turn it over to me?

Fitz. Young Man, your proper, and therefore your happiest, station is that from which you were removed. The requisite of a Soldier—is not Vulgarity assuming Assurance. Intrepid Spirit, nice Honour, Generosity, and Understanding, all unite to form him. By these the British Soldier continues the First Character in Europe, makes England for ever invincible, and her resplendent arms triumphant in every quarter of the Globe.

Sophy. Well, Bob may do as he will! I'll go back to Cornwall directly, and warn all my Neighbours to take special care—how they trust to a great man's Promises at an Election!

Pen. Oh dear! Heigho! With all my high London-Finish I believe I too must return to the Rustics —and all that sort of thing!

Both. Heigho! Oh dear! [*Exeunt, arm-in-arm.*

Spark. Well, great Attempts, and great Failings mark the Life of a Man of Spirit! There is an *eclat* even in my disappointment to night, and I am ready for a fresh set of Adventures tomorrow. (*Going.*)

Fitz. Stay, my Lord! though you are incorrigible, you shall be made to feel, and then I have done with you.—Beauchamp has answered all my Hopes; this charming woman, in rewarding him, merits the happiness that awaits her; and that I may give the fullest Sanction to her choice, I declare him, though more distantly related to me than your Lordship, Heir to my possessions.—As more Estates go from, than

come to, your Lordship through the Dice-box, you will *feel* this blow, on which I know you had not reflected.

Spark. (*agitated.*) What! disinherited! (*strikes his forehead*)—discomposing that!—Are you - - - I must escape Reflection—or at least postpone it—amidst the distractions of Dissipation! [*Exit.*

Beauch. And was it then to You, Sir!—the Emotions of my Gratitude—

Fitz. Your Conduct has compleatly rewarded me; and, that your Profession may be no interruption to your happiness—

Lady B. Oh! I protest against that! Our union would then appear a prudent, sober affair, and I should lose the credit of being romantic in my attachment, to the man my Heart prefers.

Fitz. To you I resign him with Pleasure—his Fate is in your hands.

Lady B. Then, he shall continue a Soldier! one of those whom—Love and his Country constitute their Guardians!

Beauch. Love and my Country! Yes, ye shall have equal rule in my Heart! These were the passions by which our Forefathers were animated to the acquisition of their Renown;—and I shall glory in joining those Bands, that yield not in Fame—even to their Ancestors!

A BOLD STROKE FOR A HUSBAND.

A COMEDY.

The Author had hitherto confined herself within the range of English manners; but now, for Variety, she takes her flight to other realms, and customs differing from our own.

This play came out in the year 1783. *Its schemes are so numerous, that almost every Character forms a plot. It has certainly considerable whim and fancy, to give an air of Probability to which, distance of Time or distance of Place was requisite; the Author has chosen the latter, and the Scene is laid in Spain, where to the romantic the mind readily gives credit.*

It was intended that VICTORIA, *amiably employed in reclaiming her Husband, and* CARLOS *should be the Leading Characters in this Drama, the vivacious adventures of* JULIO *and* OLIVIA *enlivening the serious business in which the Moral of the Play is enforced. This is clear from the Prologue, and from the Play itself. On the Stage the Author's intention ought to be fulfilled; but, from the way in which the Comedy is sometimes cast, that intention is controuled, the piece is thrown into the class of comedies merely lively, and deprived of half its Strength.*

This arises from the frequent custom, whilst the most brilliant talents of the theatre are called forth in JULIO OLIVIA *and* MINETTE, *of allotting* CARLOS VICTORIA *and* LAURA *to inferior performers. Yet there are situations enough of great Interest, throughout the adventures of* CARLOS *and* VICTORIA, *to bear out any talents that may be exerted in them. And no inferior performer can do Justice to the strongly drawn character*

of the degraded LAURA*; particularly in the first scene of the Fifth Act, at the moment when she is deluded to destroy the Deed, and thereby to preserve* VICTORIA *and her Children from destruction.*

At the Theatre generally the Third Scene of the Third Act, to the end of the act, is omitted for brevity, and DON CÆSAR, *in the Second Scene of the Fourth Act, comes in without* MARCELLA, *and commences with the fifth speech.* MARCELLA, *who is only introduced by the author in these two scenes, in the latter of which she speaks but once, and* VASQUEZ *her Father who is only introduced in the first of them, form thus no part of the* Dramatis Personæ *on the Stage. But this causes no Confusion; for the* LETTER *in the Second Scene of the Fourth Act explains to the audience every thing contained in the matter omitted. And though old* VASQUEZ *and* MARCELLA *his Daughter are not unentertaining in the closet, at the Theatre their absence is advantageous*; *because, on account of the slight importance of the characters, none but very inferior performers can be expected in them, by whom the current of the action is checked.*

In their absence the adventures of OLIVIA *and her Lovers proceed, as they should to give them their full effect, in one unbroken current of Vivacity.*

PROLOGUE.

By all my sanguine hopes, our Author cries,
Whilst expectation sparkles in her eyes,
I see none here to dread, be fear resigned,
Each man seems candid, and each woman kind.
But still, a word or two I'll briefly say
The Bold Acts vindicating of our Play.
Of human conduct, in each varied scene,
Th' *extreme* succeeds beyond the patient mean;
If eminence in Rank your bosom fires,
If merit to Preferment bold aspires,
Be not contented with the formal part,
But—" snatch a Grace beyond the Rules of art."
Bold Strokes, by powerful Genius firmly struck,
Attract success that *governs* turns of Luck.
'Tis thus, we see, still England's genius breathes,
And numerous brows are deck'd with Laurel wreathes,
Bold Hits in War are England's loftiest pride,
View how our Heroes live—how other Heroes died!
In Vice, 'tis true Bold Hits may close renown;
The Spendthrift turned a Swindler on the town,
When Cheating fails, performs a bolder part,
And steals a Purse—a Bold Stroke for the Cart!
The Gamester, careless of each tender tie,
His last Purse ventures on a single die,
And ruined, quite impatient of the evil,
Destroys himself—a Bold Hit for the Devil!
Shall Spirit to the vicious be confined?
Shall Virtue live inactive in the mind?

Our Play shall show Recovery of a heart
By one Bold Hit of female virtuous art.
A female pen calls female virtue forth,
And fairly shews to man her sex's worth.
Did men all know what Woman's sense can do,
How apt their wit, their constancy how true,
The Marriage vow no more would rakes revile,
To Vice, from virtue, hoping to beguile.
Husbands, beware! from Satire not exempt,
You'll find exposed your vices to contempt;
Our sanction'd aim, to rectify the age
By bringing rising folly on the stage.

CHARACTERS.

DON CÆSAR,	— — —	*Mr. Quick.*
OLIVIA,	*His Daughter.* — —	*Mrs. Mattocks.*
——DON JULIO,	} —	*Mr. Lewis.*
——DON VINCENTIO,	} *Her Lovers.*	*Mr. Edwin.*
——DON GARCIA,	} —	*Mr. Whitfield.*
MINETTE,	*Olivia's Servant.* —	*Mrs. Wilson.*
DON CARLOS,	— — —	*Mr. Wroughton.*
VICTORIA,	*His Wife.* —	*Mrs. Robinson.*
INIS,	*Her Servant.* — —	*Miss Platt.*
LAURA,	— — — —	*Mrs. Whitfield.*
PEDRO,	} *Her Servants.*	*Mr. Stevens.*
SANCHA,	} *Her Servants.*	*Mrs. Davenett.*
GASPAR,	*Don Cæsar's Steward.* —	*Mr. Wilson.*
VASQUEZ,	— — — —	*Mr. Fearon.*
MARCELLA,	*His Daughter.* —	*Miss Morris.*

SCENE.—MADRID.

A BOLD STROKE FOR A HUSBAND.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I. A STREET IN MADRID.

SANCHA *comes out of a House, advances, then runs back and beckons to* PEDRO *within.*

Sancha. Hist! Pedro! Pedro—

Enter PEDRO.

there he is—dost see him? just turning by St. Antony in the Corner. Now, do you tell him that your mistress is not at home; and, if his jealous Donship should insist on searching the house, as he did yesterday, say that somebody is ill—that the Black has got a fever, or that—

Ped. Pho! pho! get you in. Dont I know that the Duty of a Lacquey in Madrid is to lie with a good grace? I have been from the Country a whole week, and have been studying nothing else the whole

time—I'll defy Don or Devil to surprise me into a Truth. Get you in, I say—here he comes.

[*Exit Sancha.*

Enter CARLOS.

Ped. (*strutting up to him*) Donna Laura is not at home, Sir!

Car. Come, Sir, what have you received for telling that Lie?

Ped. Lie! lie!—Signor!

Car. It must be a lie by your Eagerness to deliver it. An undesigning Varlet would have waited till he was asked; but thou bawlest that she may *hear* how well thou obeyest her—*Donna Laura is not at home, Sir!*

Ped. Hear!—what from the Grotto to the Street! I'm no fool!—

Car. Ah! (*seizes him*) Sir, your ears shall soon have more than even their natural length—if you dont tell me who is with her in the Grotto.

Ped. The Grotto, Sir—the Grotto Sir!—I only meant—

Car. Fool! dost trifle with me?—who is with her? (*Pinching his Ear.*)

Ped. Oh!—why nobody, Sir—(*Cries out*)—only the pretty young Gentleman's Valet waiting for an answer to a Letter he brought.—There! I have saved my ears at the expense of my Place! I have worn this fine co^t but a week, and shall be turned off as a very bad Servant, for not being able to lie completely!

Car. If thou wilt promise to be faithful to *me*, I'll not betray thee; nor at present enter the house.

Ped. Oh, very well Sir, then I must change my Ally, that's all.

Car. How often does the pretty young Gentleman visit her?

Ped. Every day, Sir; if he misses, Madam's stark wild.

Car. Where does he live?

Ped. Truly—I know not, Sir!

Car. How!—(*menacing.*)

Ped. Indeed I dont—but she calls him Florio.

Car. You must acquaint me when he is next here.

Ped. But now—Conscience misgives me, Sir—suppose blood should be spilt!

Car. Promise!—or I'll lead you by the Ears to the Grotto.

Ped. I promise—I promise—Oh!

Car. There—(*gives him money*) take that. If thou art faithful, I'll treble it. Now, go in and be a good lad, and—d'ye hear?—you may tell lies to every body else, but remember, you must always speak Truth to me.

Ped. I will Sir—I will—upon my Conscience!

[Exit—*looking at the money.*

Car. 'Tis well my Passion is extinguished, I can now act with coolness. I'll wait patiently for Discovery—but, if ever I trust to Woman more, may every—eh! why surely here comes my quondam friend Julio.

Enter Julio.

Julio. Don Carlos? Yes, by all the sober gods of Matrimony! Why what business—goodman Gravity—canst thou have in Madrid? I understood you were married, and quietly settled with your family in your pastures, and—ha! ha! the instructive Companion of Country Vine dressers.

Car. I have forsworn the Country—left my family—and run away from my Wife!

Julio. What then, really, Matrimony has not totally destroyed thy Free-will?

Car. 'Tis with Difficulty I have preserved it though; for Women thou knowest are most unrea-

sonable beings. As soon as I had exhausted my Stock of love tales, which, with management, lasted beyond the honey-moon, Madam grew sullen. I found home dull, and amused myself in the neighbourhood :—worse and worse! we had now nothing but Faintings, Tears, and Hysterics, for four and twenty honey-moons more. So, one morning, I gave her in her sleep a farewell salute, to comfort her when she should awake, and, posting to Madrid—escaped from thraldom to bound in Freedom.

Julio. Were it not for the clog at your heel!

Car. Unfortunately (*musing*) in my state of Freedom, I have contrived to hobble into a Scrape. In that house is a woman of Beauty—who pretends to Character and Fortune. She appeared devoted to me—but has proved perfidious.

Julio. Perfidious! give her to the winds.

Car. Ah! but she holds me by Bonds Julio! I have been a fool—a Woman's fool. In a state of Intoxication she wheedled, or rather cheated, me out of a Settlement.

Julio. Pshaw! is that all?

Car. Oh! but you know not its extent!—a settlement of lands that both Honour and Gratitude ought to have preserved sacred from such base alienation. In short, if I cannot recover them I am a ruined man!

Julio. Why, in your attempt at Freedom, you have got a worse clog than t'other!—Poor Carlos! so bewived and be—

Car. Prithee have compassion!

Enter SERVANT *with a Letter to* JULIO, *who reads it, and nods to the Servant, who goes out.*

Car. An Apppointment I'll be sworn, by that double air of Mystery and Satisfaction. Come, be friendly, and communicate.

Julio. (*Putting up the Letter*) You are married Carlos!—that's all I have to say—you are married.

Car. Pho! that's past, and ought to be forgotten.

Julio. The time has been, when thou might'st have been entrusted with such a dear secret; when I might have opened the billet, and feasted thee with the sweet meandering lines at the bottom which form her name, when—

Car. What, 'tis from a Woman then?

Julio. It is.

Car. Handsome?

Julio. Humph! not absolutely handsome; but she'll pass with one who has not had his taste spoilt by—Matrimony.

Car. Malicious dog!—Is she young?

Julio. Why—under twenty—fair Complexion, azure eyes, red lips, teeth of pearl, polished neck, fine turn'd shape, graceful—

Car. Hold, Julio, if thou lov'st me!—Is it possible she can be so bewitching a creature?

Julio. 'Tis possible for any thing I know to the contrary; for I never saw her. But, Hope is in me so vivid—that I could fancy that, and ten times more.

Car. What star does she inhabit?

Julio. Irradiate, thou should'st have said, after such a description;—but, in truth, I know not. My orders are to be in waiting at Eight at the Prado.

Car. Prado! Why Julio can't you take me with you? for, though I have forsworn the sex myself, yet I may be of use to you, against some jealous Rival, you know.

Julio. Why as you are a poor woe-begone married mortal, I'll have compassion and suffer thee to come.

Car. Then, I am a man again! Wife, avaunt! Mistress, farewell!—At Eight you say?

Julio. Exactly.

Car. The Ghost of what I was—I'll meet thee at Philippi! [*Exeunt, severally.*

SCENE II.

A SPACIOUS GARDEN, BELONGING TO DON CÆSAR.

Enter MINETTE, *and* INIS.

Min. There, will that do, Inis? My Lady sent me to make up a Nosegay. The Orange flowers, how sweet?

Inis. Poh! What signifies wearing sweets outside her Bosom, unless they could sweeten her Temper within? 'Tis amazing you can be so much at your ease; one might think your Lady's tongue, Minette, was a Lute, and her morning scolds an agreeable serenade.

Min. So they are—Custom you know. I have been used to her music now these two years, and I dont believe I could relish my breakfast without it.

Inis. I would rather never break my fast, than do it on such terms.—What a difference between your mistress and mine! Donna Victoria is as much too gentle, as her cousin is too harsh.

Min. Aye, and you see what she gets by it. Had she been more spirited, her husband would not have forsaken her.—Men enlisted into matrimony, like those in the King's service, will now and then run away—if Fear does not keep them in dread of desertion.

Inis. If making a husband afraid is the way to keep him faithful, I believe your Lady will be the happiest wife in Spain.

Min. Ha! ha! ha!—how people may be deceived! —nay, how people are deceived!—but time will discover all things.

Inis. What!—what is there a Secret in the business Minette? if there is—hang time, let's have it immediately.

Min. Now, if I dared tell you—lud! lud! how I could surprise ye— (*Going.*)

Inis. (*Stopping her.*)—Dont go!

Min. I must! I am on the very brink of betraying my Mistress. I must leave you. Mercy upon me! it rises like new bread.

Inis. If you stir till I know all—I hope it will choak ye!

Min. Will you never breathe a Syllable?

Inis. Never!

Min. Will you strive to forget it the moment you have heard it?

Inis. To forget it shall be constantly in my Memory!

Min. You are sure you will not let me stir from this spot, until you know the whole?

Inis. Not so far as a thrush hops.

Min. So!—now then—in one word here it goes. Though every body supposes my Lady an errant Scold, she's no more a—

DON CÆSAR. (*Without.*)

Cæs. Shame to her—shame to her—an incessant Scold!

Min. Oh, St. Jerome, here's her Father, and his Privy Counsellor Gaspar. I can never communicate a Secret in quiet. Well! come to my chamber, for, now my Tongue's set, you shall have the whole.—I wouldn't keep it another day, to be *Confidante* to an Infanta! [*Exeunt.*

Enter Don CÆSAR, *and* GASPAR.

Gasp. Take Comfort, Sir—take Comfort!

Cæs. Take it! Why I am very ready to take it, if I can get it. Say, take Physic Sir, and take Poison Sir, they are to be had; but what signifies bidding

me take Comfort, when I can neither beg it, buy it, nor steal it?

Gasp. But, Patience will bring it you, Sir.

Cæs. 'Tis false, Sirrah. Patience is a Cheat, and the man that ranked her with the Cardinal Virtues was a fool. I have had Patience these three long years, but, as to her introducing Comfort, she has never prevailed upon her to look in upon me with a single—Cheer up!

Gasp. Aye Sir, but you know the Wise-ones say, the twin Sister of Comfort is Good-humour. Now, if you would but entertain Good-humour, her Sister Comfort will soon follow in her train.

Cæs. Then let my Daughter discard perverse humour; 'tis a more certain bar to marriage than ugliness or folly. My death is hastened by the idea that The Honours of my Family will be extinct.—How many have laid siege to her! but that Temper of her's, of late, since she is grown up to womanhood, is as impregnable to every man in Spain—as the Rock of Gibraltar!

Gasp. Aye, well, though Troy held out ten years, let her once tell her Beads over, unmarried, at five and twenty, and, my life on it, she ends the rosary with a hearty prayer for a good husband.

Cæs. And am I to wait, in hopes the horrors of Old-Maidenism will frighten her into Civility? No, no; I'll shut her up in a Convent, and marry myself. There's my neighbour Don Vasquez's Daughter, she is to be sure but Nineteen, but—

Gasp. I was just turning such an adventure in my mind, Sir! You are but a young gentleman I take it of Sixty Three; and a husband of Sixty three, who marries a wife of nineteen, will lead a life of rare mental comfort take my word for it.

Cæs. Do you joke, Sirrah!

Gasp. Why, Sir, I really think it would be one of the pleasantest things in the world.—Madam would bring a new Stile into the Family; and when you

are above stairs in the Gout, the music of her Concerts, and the spirit of her *Converzationes*, would reach your sick bed, and be a thousand times more enlivening than flannels and panada.

Cæs. Aye, I understand ye. But, this daughter of mine—I shall give her but two chances more. Don Garcia, and Don Vincentio, will both be here to day, and, if she plays over the old game—I'll marry tomorrow morning, if I hang myself the next.

Gasp. You reason consequentially, Signor, the natural alliance of the two events should always be considered.

Cæs. There's Don Garcia!—there he is, coming through the Portico. Run to my daughter, and bid her remember what I have said—(*Exit Gaspar*) though she has had her lesson, another *memento* mayn't be amiss. A young Gipsey! pretty and witty and rich—a match for a Prince, and yet—but hist! not a word to my young man; if I can but keep him in ignorance until he is married, he must make the best of his bargain afterwards, as other honest men have done before him—

Enter GARCIA.

Welcome, Don Garcia! Why you are rather before your time.

Gar. Gallantry forbid I should not be, when a fair Lady is concerned. Should Donna Olivia welcome me as frankly as you do, I shall think I have been tardy.

Cæs. When you made your overtures, Signor, I understood it was from inclination to be allied to my family; not from any particlar passion for my daughter. Have you ever seen her?

Gar. But once—that transiently; yet sufficiently to convince me she is charming.

Cæs. Why yes, though I say it, there are few prettier women in Madrid; and she has enemies

amongst her own sex accordingly—who pretend to say that—I say, Sir, they have reported that she is not blessed with that kind of Docility and Gentleness that a—now though she may not be so very insipid as some young women, yet, upon the whole—

Gar. Oh, fie Sir! not a word. A BEAUTY cannot be ill-tempered; gratified Vanity keeps her in good humour with herself and every body about her.

Cæs. Yes, as you say—Vanity is a prodigious sweetner; and Olivia, considering how much she has been humoured, is gentle and pliant as—

Enter MINETTE.

Min. Oh, Sir, shield me from my Mistress! She is in one of her old Tempers—the whole house is in an uproar. I cant support it!

Cæs. Hush!!

Min. No, Sir, I cant hush—a Saint could not bear it. I am tired of her tyranny—and must quit her Service.

Cæs. Then quit it in a moment—go to my Steward and receive your wages—go—begone!—'Tis a Cousin of my Daughter's she is speaking of.

Min. A Cousin, Sir!—No 'tis Donna Olivia, your Daughter—my Mistress. Oh, Sir! you seem to be a sweet tender-hearted young Gentleman—'twould move you to Pity if—

Cæs. I'll move you, hussy, to some purpose, if you dont move off!

Gar. I am really confounded—can the charming Olivia—

Cæs. Spite, Sir—mere Malice! My daughter has refused her some cast gown, or some—

OLIVIA, *without.*

Oliv. Where is she!—Where is Minette?

Cæs. Oh, 'tis all over!—the Tempest is coming!

Enter OLIVIA.

Oliv. Oh, you vile creature!—to speak to me! to answer me!—am I made to be answered?

Cæs. Daughter!—Daughter!

[*During the following conversation, he shows the most anxious impatience.*

Oliv. Because I threw my work-bag at her, forsooth she had the Insolence to complain; and, on my repeating it, said—she would not bear it.—Servants chuse what they shall bear!

Min. When you're married, Ma'am, I hope your Husband will bear your humour more patiently than I have done.

Oliv. My Husband!—dost think my husband shall deprive me of my Will? I long to set a Pattern to those milky wives, whose mean compliances degrade the sex.

Gar. (*Aside.*) Vastly opportune, this!

Oliv. The only husband on record who knew how to behave to a Wife was Socrates; and, though Zantippe his Lady was a Grecian, I have reason to believe that some of a Colony of her Descendants matched into our family—and never shall my tame Submission disgrace my Ancestry.

Gar. Wonderful! Why have you never curbed this intemperate Spirit Don Cæsar?

Oliv. (*Starting*) Curbed Sir! talk thus to your Groom.—Curbs and Bridles for a Woman's tongue!

Gar. Not for your's Lady truly! 'tis too late. The torrent, now so over-bearing, should have been taken at its spring, it might then perhaps have been stem'd, and turned in gentle streamlets at the Master's pleasure.

Oliv. A Mistake, friend!—my Spirit, at its spring, was too overwhelming to be meanly master'd.

Gar. Indeed! Perhaps, gentle Catherine, you may meet with a Petruchio yet.

Oliv. But no gentle Catherine will he find me, be-

lieve me.—Why, she had not the Firmness of a roasted chesnut; a few big words, an empty oath, and a scanty Dinner, made her as submissive as a Spaniel. —My Lofty Spirit shall resist big words, oaths, or starving.

Min. I believe so, indeed. Help the poor Gentleman, I say, to whose lot you fall!

Gar. Don Cæsar, Adieu! The resentment I should otherwise feel at your endeavouring to deceive me into such a marriage, my Commiseration of your Fate subdues!

Oliv. Marriage!—Oh Mercy, is this Don Garcia? (*Apart to her Father.*)

Cæs. Yes, Termagant!

Oliv. What a Misfortune! Why did you not tell me it was the gentleman you designed to marry me to?—Oh, Sir, all that has passed was in sport; a contrivance between my Maid and me. I have no spirit at all—I am as patient as Poverty.

Gar. This mask sits not easily on your features fair Lady. I have seen you without Disguise, and rejoice in your ignorance of my Name, since, but for that, my peaceful home might have become the seat of perpetual discord.

Min. Aye, Sir, you would never have known what a quiet hour—

Oliv. (*Slaps her on the shoulder*) Impertinence!—Indeed, Sir, I can be as gentle and forbearing as a Pet Lamb.

Gar. I cannot doubt, Madam, what you give such striking Proofs of. But—adieu—though I shall pray for your conversion—rather than have the honour of it, I'd turn Dominican, and condemn myself to perpetual celibacy. [*Exit.*

Cæs. Now Hussy!—now Hussy!—what do you expect?

Oliv. Dear me, how can you be so unreasonable! Did ever Daughter do more to oblige a father? I absolutely begged the man to have me!

Cæs. Yes, Vixen! after you had made him detest you. What, I suppose he didn't hit your Fancy Madam—though there's not in all Spain a man of prettier conversation.

Oliv. Why, he has a convenient kind of conversation enough—'tis like a Parenthesis.

Cæs. Like a parenthesis!

Oliv. Yes, it might be all left out—and no loss of *Sense* the consequence. However, I really think him a likely young man, and that he would have made a good sort of a husband; for, notwithstanding his Blustering, had I been his Wife, in three months he should have been as complaisant as—

Cæs. Aye, there it is—there it is! That Spirit of your's, Hussy, you can neither conquer nor conceal; but—I'll find a way to tame it, I'll warrant me! [*Exit.*

[*Olivia, and her Maid, watch him out, and then burst into a Laugh.*

Min. Well, Ma'am, I give you Joy! had other Ladies as much Success in gaining Lovers, as you in getting rid of them, what smiling faces we should see!

Oliv. But, to what purpose do I get rid of them, whilst they rise in Succession like monthly pinks? Was there ever any thing so provoking?—After some quiet, and believing the men had ceased to trouble themselves about me, no less than two proposals have been made to my inexorable father this very day.—What will become of me?

Min. Why what should become of you? You'll chuse one from the pair I hope.—Believe me, Ma'am, the only way to get rid of the impertinence of Lovers is to take one of them for a Husband—and make him a Scare-crow to all the rest.

Oliv. Oh—but I cannot!—Invention, assist me this one day!

Min. Upon my word, Ma'am, Invention is not in

arrear to you; I'm afraid you can draw on it no longer. You must trust to the effect of your established character of Vixen.

Oliv. But, that wont frighten them all, you know, though it did the business of sober Don Gracia. The brave General Antonio would have captured me, in spite of every thing, had I not luckily discovered his antipathy to Cats, and so scared a Hero—by pretending an immoderate passion for young Kittens!

Min. Yes, but you was more resolutely beset by the Castilian Count, with his engraved Genealogy from Noah.

Oliv. Oh, he would have kept his post—as immoveably as the Griffins at his Gate, had I not very seriously imparted to him, in confidence, that my Mother's Great Uncle sold Oranges in Arragon.—Ha! ha! ha! and my little Spark too, who washes in Rose water, and whose dress is scented with violets, would never have dismissed himself, notwithstanding all my scoldings, had I not mixed Asafœtida with my Mareschall Powder!

Min. And pray, Ma'am, if I may be so bold, who is the next Gentleman?

Oliv. Oh, Don Vincentio, who distracts every body with his Skill in Music. He ought to be married to a Viol de Gamba.—I thank my stars that I have never had a Miser in my list;—on such a Character all Art would be lost—nothing but an Earthquake to swallow up my estate could save me!

Min. Well, if some one did but know!—how happy would some one be, that, for his sake—

Oliv. Now dont be impertinent, Minette! You have several times attempted to slide yourself into a secret which I am resolved to keep to myself. Continue faithful, and suppress your Curiosity! [*Exit.*

Min. Suppress my Curiosity, Madam! Why—I'm a Chambermaid! and a sorry one too it should seem, to be in your confidence two years, and never have

got the Master-Secret yet! I never was six weeks in a family before, but I knew every secret they had had in it for three generations. Aye, and I'll know this too, or I'll blow up all her plans, and declare to the world, that she is no more a Vixen—than other fine Ladies.

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I. AN APARTMENT AT DONNA LAURA'S.

Enter LAURA, *followed by* CARLOS.

Car. Nay, Madam, you may as well stay where you are; for I will follow you into every apartment until you hear me. (*Seizing her hand.*)

Lau. This constant intrusion is not to be endured; within my own walls to be thus—

Car. The time has been, when within your house I might be Master.

Lau. Yes, for you were then master of my Heart; that gave you a right which—

Car. You have now transferred to another.
(*Flinging away her hand.*)

Lau. Well Sir!

Car. "Well Sir!"—Unblushing acknowledgment!

Lau. This complaint is merely because I have the start of you! In a few weeks I should have been the Accuser, and you the false and fickle.

Car. Oh, what you prudently looked out in time for another Lover forsooth—merely to secure yourself from Disgrace!

Lau. Your Sneer is excusable, Sir, for you are mortified.

Car. Mortified!

Lau. Yes, mortified to the Soul; for the vainest female, Carlos, in the hour of her exultation and

power, is still out-done by man in Vanity;—it is more your ruling passion than our's. It is wounded Vanity that makes you thus tremble with rage at being deserted!

Car. Madam! Madam!

Lau. Instead of this Rage, you would have been all cool insolence, had I waited for *your* change—the crime which now appears so black in me. Then, if, with all my sex's weakness, I had knelt at your feet, and reproached you only with my tears, how composed would have been your feelings! Scarcely would you have deigned to form for me a phrase of pity; would have bid me forget a man no longer worthy of my attachment, and recommended me to Hartshorn and my Women.

Car. Has any hour of my existence given cause for such unjust—

Lau. Yes Carlos, I bring thee to the test!—You saw me, you loved me; was no fond trusting woman deserted for the transient passion? Yes, one blest even with beauty, gentleness, and youth; one, who made thee rich, and whom thou mad'st thy Wife!

Car. My Wife!—here's a turn! So, to revenge the quarrels of my Wife—

Lau. No. To the list of my demerits I will not add Hypocrisy. What I have done was determined on without more regard to her feelings, than you had for them. I, like you, thought but of myself.

Car. And you dare avow to my face that you have a passion for another?

Lau. I do, without disguise. I confess, so tender is my love for Florio, it has scarcely left a trace of that I once avowed for Carlos.

Car. Well Madam, if I hear this without brooding vengeance, thank the annihilation of that passion, whose remembrance is as dead in my bosom as in your's. Let us, then, part Friends—and with a mutual acquittal of every obligation. The natural consequence is, that you give up the Settlement of

that Estate, the conveyance of which left me almost a beggar.

Lau. Give it up!—ha! ha! No, Carlos; you consigned me that estate as a proof of real love. Do not imagine I'll give up the only result of our intimacy of which I am not ashamed.

Car. Base Woman! You know it was not a voluntary gift; after having in vain practised upon my Fondness, you prevailed on me, whilst in a state of intoxication, to sign the Deed which you had artfully prepared for the purpose;—you must restore it.

Lau. Never—never.

Car. That word is ruin! Call it back, Madam—or I'll be revenged on thee through thy heart's dearest object—thy minion Florio!—*he* shall not riot on my fortune.

Lau. Ha! ha! ha! Florio is safe. In another country we shall enjoy the blessings of thy fond passion, whilst thou indulgest but in Hatred and Execration. [*Exit.*

Car. (*Following*) My vengeance shall first fall on her—No, he shall be the first victim, or 'twill be incomplete. Reduced to Poverty, I cannot live.—Folly! whither are flown the gilded prospects of my guiltless youth? Had I—'tis too late to look back, remorse attends the past;—in looking onward—I shrink with horror from the scene of ruin! [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

DON CÆSAR'S.

VICTORIA *enters, perusing a Letter.* *Enter* OLIVIA.

Oliv. (*speaking as entering*) To be sure. If my father should enquire for me, tell him I am in Donna Victoria's apartment.—Smiling I protest! my dear gloomy Victoria, whence have you obtained that sun-shiny look?

Vict. It is but an April sunshine I fear; but, who could resist such an excitement to smile?—a Letter from Donna Laura, my husband's Mistress, stiling me her dearest Florio! her Life! her Soul! and complaining of a twelve hour's absence, as of the bitterest misfortune.

Oliv. Ha! ha! ha! Most doughty Don! pray let us see you in your Feather and Doublet! As a Cavaleiro, it seems you are striking. So suddenly to have robbed your husband of his Charmer's heart you must have used some Witchery!

Vict. Yes, powerful Witchery—the knowledge of my sex.

Oliv. Oh, I suppose, Flattery of her Person not being necessary as the Creature is not ugly—you praised her Understanding, was captivated by her Wit, and absolutely struck dumb by the amazing beauties of—her Mind.

Vict. Oh, no,—that's the mode prescribed by the *Essayists* on the female heart—ha! ha! ha! How many are there who, from fifteen to fifty, would not rather have a compliment to the tip of their ear, than a volume in praise of their intellects?

Oliv. So Flattery paid to her Charms then is your boasted Nostrum.

Vict. No, that's only an occasional ingredient; but, 'tis in vain to attempt a Description—of what changed its nature with every moment. I was now attentive—now gay—then tender—then careless. I strove rather to convince her that—*I* was charming, than that I myself was charmed; and whenever I saw Love's arrow quivering in her heart, instead of attentive assiduity, I sang a triumphant air—and remembered a sudden engagement.

Oliv. But, can all this be worth while, merely to defeat a fickle husband with one woman, whilst he is setting his feather perhaps at others?

Vict. Merely to defeat him was not my first motive. As the Portuguese robbed me of his heart, I

concluded her mind had fascinations which were unpossessed by me. It was impossible to visit her as a Woman; I have therefore assumed the character of a Cavalier of shattered fortunes who offers her MARRIAGE, that, in my visits I may so study her as to imitate the perfections he found in her, and lure him from the degrading situation of remaining within the power of such a being—seeking for happiness where there is the absence of all Principle.

Oliv. Pretty humble creature!

Vict. But, I have another object of the uttermost import to my Children! My (what Dishonour and what Cruelty!)—my husband has given this woman an Estate, almost all that his dissipations had left us.

Oliv. Indeed!

Vict. To make it more culpable, it was my estate! it was that fortune which my lavish Love had made his without restriction.

Oliv. How could you be so improvident?

Vict. Alas! without restraint I trusted him with my Heart, with my Happiness. Should I have shown a greater solicitude for lesser objects?

Oliv. Why the Event proves that Advice should have been sought from the experienced.—But pray how, under all circumstances, can you be thus passive? having assumed the Man, I dont know whether I should not make him feel a man's resentment.

Vict. Oh, Olivia! what resentment could I wish to gratify against him I have vow'd to honour; and whom both my Duty and my Heart compel me yet to love?

Oliv. Why, really now — I think; — positively there's no thinking about these *arcana* of married life.

Vict. You, who know me, can judge how I have suffered in prosecuting my plan! I have discarded, for a season, the natural reserve of my sex, and have worn the mask of love—to the destroyer of my Feli-

city! But, the Object is too great to be abandoned—nothing less than to save my Husband from Ruin, and to restore him to me and to his Children.

Oliv. Well Victoria, I hardly know whether most to blame or praise you; but, with the rest of the world—I suppose the *Result* will determine me.

Enter GASPAR.

Gasp. (*to Olivia*) Pray, Madam, are your wedding shoes ready?

Oliv. Insolence! (*Apart.*—I can scarcely ever keep up the Vixen to this fellow.)

Gasp. You'll want them tomorrow morning Ma'am, that's all;—so I came to prepare ye.

Oliv. I want wedding shoes tomorrow! If you are kept on water gruel till I marry—that strange face of your's will be chap-fall'n I believe.

Gasp. Yes truly I believe so too. Lackaday, did you suppose I came to bring you News of your *own* wedding? no such glad tidings for you, Lady, believe me. You married! I am sure the man who allies himself to you, ought, like a Salamander, to be able to live in fire.

Oliv. What marriage then is it you do me the honour to inform me of?

Gasp. Why, your Father's marriage! You'll have a Mother in law tomorrow, and then having, like a dutiful daughter, danced at the wedding, will be immured in a Convent for Life.

Oliv. Immured in a Convent! then I'll raise Sedition in the Sisterhood, depose the Abbess, and turn the Confessor's chair into a Go-cart.

Gasp. So, the threat of the Mother-in-Law then, which I thought would be worse than that of the Abbess, does not frighten you!

Oliv. No, because my father dares not give me one.—Marry without *my* consent! no, no, he'll never think of it, depend on't. However, lest the fit

should grow strong upon him, I'll go and administer my Volatiles to keep it under. [*Exit.*

Gasp. Administer them cautiously then — too strong a dose of your volatiles would make the fit stubborn.—Who'd think that pretty arch look belonged to a Termagant? What a Pity! 'twould be worth a thousand Ducats to cure her.

Vict. Has Inis told you I wanted to converse with you in private, Gaspar?

Gasp. Oh, yes, Madam; and I took particular notice that it was to be in private. Sure, says I, Mrs. Inis, Madam Victoria has not taken a fancy to me; determined on a Divorce, can she be going to break her mind?

Vict. Whimsical!—ha! ha! Suppose I should Gaspar?

Gasp. Why, then, Madam, I should say Fortune had used you scurvily, to give me both Grey-Locks and a Livery.—Some young Ladies have given themselves to Grey Locks in a gilt Coach, and others have descended to worsted-lace, in each case the *Objects* of their choice had their excuse; but, if you were to form an alliance with me—pardon me, Madam, I could not stand the ridicule.

Vict. Well, will you perform a much greater service for me?

Gasp. Any thing you'll order, Madam, except capering a fandango.

Vict. You have seen my rich old Uncle in the Country?

Gasp. What, Don Sancho, who, with two thirds of a Century in his face, affects the misdemeanors of youth; conceals his baldness with amber locks; and complains of the tooth-ache—to make you believe that the two rows of Ivory he carries in his head grew there?

Vict. Oh, you know him, I find. You already resemble him in some degree, could you personate him for an hour, and make love for him? Since he can

make himself so ridiculous, he excites no Respect to prevent us from making free with his Character.—You know it must be in the stile of Don Roderigo the First.

Gasp. Hang it! I am rather too near his own age. Distinctly to perceive the degree, in which those are ridiculous who have grown old in Absurdity, requires the clearness of youthful perception.

Vict. Pho! *You* might pass for Juan's Grandson!

Gasp. Nay, if you condescend to flatter me, you secure me.

Vict. Then follow me; for Don Cæsar is approaching. In the Garden I'll make you acquainted with my Plan, and impress on your mind Don Sancho's Character. If you can hit him off, the Arts of Laura shall be foiled and Carlos be again Victoria's! [*Exit.*

Enter Don CÆSAR, *followed by* OLIVIA.

Cæs. No, no, 'tis too late—no Coaxings; I am resolved I say.

Oliv. But it is not too late; and you shan't be resolved I say. Indeed now, I'll be upon my Guard with the next Don—what's his name? not a trait of the Xantippe left;—I'll study to be charming.

Cæs. Nay, you need not study it, 'tis only of late that your temper has sour'd; you are always charming, if you will but hold your tongue.

Oliv. Do you think so? then, to the next Lover I wont open my lips. I'll answer every thing he says with a Smile, and, if he asks me to have him—drop a curtesy of thankfulness.

Cæs. Pshaw! that's too much 'tother way; you are always either below perfection, or guilty of Excess. You must talk, but talk with Goodhumour. Cant you look gently and prettily now—as I do? and say—(*speaks fast.*)—" *Yes, Sir,* and *No, Sir.—'Tis very fine weather, Sir.—Pray Sir, were you at the Ball last night?—I caught a sad Cold the other evening;* and

Bless me! I hear Lucinda has run away with a footman; and Don Philip has married his house-maid." That's the way fine Ladies talk—you never hear any thing else!

Oliv. Ha! ha! Well then—You shall see me exactly as agreeable as the best of them, if you wont give me a Mother-in-law to snub me, and set me tasks, and take up all the fine apartments, and send up your poor little Livy to lodge next the stars.

Cæs. Aye, if thou wert but always thus soft and good-humour'd, no Mother-in-law in Spain, though she brought the Castiles for her portion, should have power to snub thee. But, Livy, the trial's at hand, for, at this moment, do I expect Don Vincentio to visit you. He is but just returned from England, I have never seen him; probably he has yet only heard of your Beauty and Fortune—I hope it is not from you that he will learn the rest of your Character.

Oliv. This moment expect him! two new Lovers in one day? (*impatiently.*)

Cæs. Beginning already, as I hope to live! Aye, I see 'tis in vain; I'll send him an excuse, and marry Marcella to-morrow.

Oliv. Oh, no! upon my Obedience, I promise to be—just the soft civil creature you have described to a Word!

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. Don Vincentio is below, Sir.

Cæs. I'll wait upon him. Well, go and collect all your Smiles and your Simpers, and remember all I have said to you. Be gentle, and talk pretty small talk to him, d'ye hear; and if you please him you shall have the portion of a Dutch Burgomaster's daughter, and the Pinmoney of a Princess, you Gipsey you. (*Aside.* I think at last I have done it; the fear of this Mother-in-law will keep down the fiend in her if any thing can.) [*Exit.*

Oliv. Ah! my poor Father, your Anxieties will never end, until you bring Don Julio! Command me to surrender my Petulance, my Liberty, to him, and Iphigenia herself could not be a more willing sacrifice. But what shall I do with this Vincentio? —I hear he is so perfectly harmonized, that to r· him into an ill temper will be impracticable. try however; if it is possible to find a Discord him I'll touch the string. [*E*..

SCENE III.

ANOTHER APARTMENT.

Enter Vincentio *and* Cæsar.

Vin. Presto! presto, Signor! where is Olivia? Not a Second to spare. I have been in all the Fury of Composition; Minums and Crotchets have been battling it through my head the whole day, until, trying a Semibreve in G. Sharp, I fell into thorough flat.

Cæs. Sharp and Flat!—trying a Semibreve!—oh —excuse me Sir—I had like not to have understood you! But, a Semibreve is part of a Demi-culverin I take it, and you have been practising the Art Military.

Vin. Art Military Sir!—are you unacquainted with Music!

Cæs. Music! Oh I ask Pardon! then you are fond of Music—(*Aside.*—'Ware of Discords!)

Vin. Fond of it! devoted to it. I composed a thing to day in all the Gusto of *Sachini*, and the Sweetness of *Gluck*.—But, this recreant Finger fails me in compassing a passage in Octaves: if it does not gain more elastic vigour in a week, I shall be tempted to have it amputated—and supply the Shake with a Spring.

Cæs. Amputate a Finger to supply a Shake!

Vin. Oh, that's a Trifle in the road to Reputation; to be talked of is the Summum Bonum of this life. A young man of Rank should not glide through the world without a distinguished Rage, or as they call it in England—a Hobby Horse.

Cæs. A Hobby Horse!

Vin. Yes; that is, every man of Figure in that land of Liberty freely determines, on setting out in life, in what way to ruin himself—and that choice is called his *Hobby Horse.* One, makes a Race-Ground his scene of action; another drives his Phaeton so as to peep into his Neighbour's Garret-windows; and a third rides his Hobby-Horse in that Parliament of their's that you have heard of, where it jerks him sometimes on one Side, and sometimes on the other, sometimes in, and sometimes out, until at length his steadiness is overset, and his Constituents are jerked out of their Welfare.

Cæs. What! do those ride Hobby-Horses, who outride all the World in the race of Glory!—I wish we had a few of 'em to jerk Spain into some consideration!

Vin. This is all *Contabile;* nothing to do with Donna Olivia—the Subject of the piece. Pray, give me the Key-Note of her Heart.

Cæs. Upon my word, Signor, to speak in your own Phrase, I believe that Note has never yet been sounded.—Ah! here she comes!—look at her! isn't she a charming Girl?

Vin. Touching!—Musical I'll be sworn—her very Walk is an harmonious Passage!

Cæs. (*Aside.* I wish thou may'st get one from her Tongue!)—

Enter OLIVIA; *makes a low curtesy to each.*

Daughter, receive Don Vincentio. His Rank, Fortune, and Merit, entitle him to the Heiress of a Grandee;—he is contented to become my Son-in-

Law—if you can be pleasing in his eyes! (*she curtesies again.*)

Vin. Pleasing! she entrances me! Her presence thrills me like a Cadenza of *Pachierotti*, and every Nerve vibrates to the Music of her looks—

Her step *andante* true to art,
Pianos glance from either eye;
Oh! how *largetto* were the Heart
That Charms so *forté* could defy!

Donna Olivia! will you be pleased to note me as your Lover?

Olivia. (*curtesying*) Yes Sir—No Sir!

Vin. Yes Sir, no Sir—bewitching Timidity!

Cæs. Yes, Sir, she's remarkably timid. (*Aside.*—She's in the right cue now I see!)

Vin. 'Tis clear you have never travelled; had you been in the Country from whence I arrive—England, your Timidity would have been banished; you would have acquired a marked Character, and maintained it at all Hazards.

Oliv. 'Tis a very fine day, Sir. (*Speaking very fast.*)

Vin. Madam!

Oliv. I caught a sad cold the other evening.—Pray, Sir, were you at the Ball last night?

Vin. What Ball, fair Lady?

Oliv. Bless me! they say Lucinda has run away with a footman, and Don Philip has married his house-maid! (*Apart to Cæsar.* Now am I not as agreeable as other Fine Ladies?)

Cæs. Oh, such perverse obedience!

Vin. Really, Madam, I have not the Honour to know Don Philip and Lucinda—nor am I happy enough entirely to comprehend you.

Oliv. No!—I only meant to be agreeable! But—(*looking at her Father*) I am afraid we are mistaken in your taste for pretty little small-talk!

Vin. Pretty little small-talk!

Oliv. But—a *marked* Character you may perhaps admire—oh, very well, so do I, I doat on it.—I would not resemble the rest of the world in any thing.

Vin. *My* Taste to the fiftieth division of a Crotchet!—We shall accord admirably when we are married.

Oliv. Ah, how charmingly then we shall be unlike the rest of the world! (*Aside.* I must carry my Particularity to great Excess, I see.)

Cæs. (*Aside.*) It will do! I have hit her Humour at last—Why didn't this young dog offer himself before?

Oliv. I believe I have the Honour to carry my Taste for particularity farther than you, Don Vincentio. Pray, now, what is your usual Stile in living?

Vin. My Winters I spend in Madrid, as other people do. My Summers I drawl through at my Castle—

Oliv. As other people do! and pretend to Singularity—ha! ha! ha! Good Don Vincentio, never talk of a marked Character again.—Go into the Country in July to smell Roses and Woodbines—when *every body* regales on their fragrance! Now I would rusticate only in Winter; and my bleak Castle should be decorated with Verdure and Flowers—amidst the Zephyrs of January.

Cæs. (*Aside.*—Oh!—she'll go too far!)

Oliv. I would hang artificial foliage on the leafless trees—my rose shrubs and myrtles should be scented by Perfumers.

Vin. Oh, charming!—You beat me where I thought myself the strongest.—Would they but paragraph our Singularities in the Newspapers here as they do abroad, we should be the most envied couple in Spain.

Cæs. (*Aside.*—By St. Anthony, he is as mad as she is!)

Vin. What say you, Don Cæsar? Olivia and her Winter-Garden, and I and my Music?

Oliv. (*Aside.*—Music!—thanks for another topic —there are hopes we may yet differ!) Music did you say! Music! I am peculiar in my attachment to it.

Cæs. (*Aside.*) She has saved my Life!—I thought she was going to knock his Hobby Horse on the head.

Vin. You enchant me! I have the finest Band in Madrid. My first Violin draws a longer bow than *Giardini;* my Clarinets, my *Viol de Gamba*—Oh, you shall have such Concerts!

Oliv. Concerts! Pardon me there—that's in the *common* routine.—My passion is a Solo.

Vin. That *is* singular! I love a Crash; so does every body of *goût.*

Oliv. My Taste you know, isn't like *every body's!* My Nerves are so particularly fine that more than a Solo overpowers them. (*Aside.* I must contrive to name something monstrously absurd now—or I am ruined!)

Vin. Charming Olivia, which is the object of your preference? I will study to become its master that I may woo you with its music—Is it the Guitar? the Piano forté? the Harp—

Oliv.—You have it—you have it!—a Harp—yes. But then it is a particular Species of Harp, of which perhaps you have not yet been fond; my peculiar Taste is—a Jew's-Harp.—How delightful the charming h-r-r-r-m of its Bass! running on the ear like the distant rumble of a Stage-coach. It presents the Ideas of Vastness and Weight to the mind. I'll give you my hand—the moment you are its Master.

Vin. Da Capo, Madam, da Capo!—a Jew's-Harp!!

Oliv. Bless me, Sir—dont I tell you so? Violins chill me—Clarinets by Sympathy hurt my Lungs; and, instead of maintaining a Band under my roof, I

would not keep a Servant who knew a Bassoon from a Flute, or could tell whether he heard a Jigg or a Canzonetta.

Cæs. (*In great Agitation*) Thou perverse one! you know you love Concerts, you know you do!

Oliv. *I* love them! It is indiscriminate Custom that attaches people to the Jumble of fifty different instruments at once; 'twould be as well to hold a Conversation in fifty different languages. A Band! 'tis a mere *Chaos* of sound—I had rather listen to a three stringed Guitar—serenading a Sempstress in a neighbouring Garret.

Cæs. Oh you!—Don Vincentio, this is nothing but Perverseness.— Hussy! didn't you shake when you mentioned a Garret! didn't Bread and Water, and a Step-mother, come into your head at the instant?

Vin. *Piano, piano,* good Sir! Spare yourself all further trouble. Should the Princess of Guzzarat with all her diamond-mines offer herself, I would not accept them in lieu of my Band—a Band to collect which has half effected my Ruin. I would have allowed your daughter a blooming Garden in Winter—I would even have procured Barrenness and Snow for her in the Dog-days; but—to have my Band insulted!—to have my knowledge in Music slighted!—to be brought down from all the Energies of Composition by the D-r-o-n-e of a Jew's-Harp!—I cannot breathe under the Idea.

Cæs. Then—then you refuse her, Sir?

Vin. I cannot utter a sound so harsh!—we are arrived at our *Finale!* Adieu Madam, I leave you to enjoy your Solos—whilst I betake myself to the Raptures of a Crash! [*Exit.*

Don CÆSAR *goes up to her, and looks fiercely in her face. Then goes out without speaking.*

Oliv. Mercy! that silent Anger is terrifying—I

read a young Mother-in-Law, and an old Lady Abbess, in every line of his face—

Enter VICTORIA.

Well, you heard the whole I suppose—heard poor unhappy me scorned and rejected!

Vict. I heard you in imminent Danger; and expected Signor *Da Capo* would snap you up, in spite of your caprice and extravagance.

Oliv. Oh they charmed, instead of scaring him. —I soon found, that my only chance was, to fall across *his* Caprice. Where is the Philosopher who could withstand that!

Vict. But what, my dear Olivia, does all this lead to?

Oliv. I dare say you can guess! Penelope had never cheated her Lovers with a never ending web, but—for her Ulysses.

Vict. Her Ulysses? what, are you married?

Oliv. Oh no, not yet! But, believe me, my design is not to lead apes; nor is my heart absolutely an Icicle! If you choose to know more, put on your veil, and slip with me through the Garden to the Prado.

Vict. I can't indeed. I am this moment going to dress *en homme*, to visit the impatient Portuguese.

Oliv. Send an excuse, for positively you go with me. I want a *Chaperon*—for I'm going to meet a man! whom I have been fool enough to think of these three years, and I dont know that ever he thought of me in his Life!

Vict. Three years in discovering that?

Oliv. He has been abroad. The only time I ever saw him was at the Dutchess of Medina's. There were a thousand people—and he was so careless, so elegant, so interesting amidst them—In a word, though he went off for France the next morning, by some Witchcraft or other—he has been before my

eyes ever since! and has made my heart adamant to every Lover!

Vict. Was the impression mutual?

Oliv. He hardly noticed me. I was then a trembling Miss, just out of a Convent, and shrinking from observation.

Vict. Why, how is it then that you are going to meet him!

Oliv. How! why I sent him this morning a command to be at the Prado! My object in this is to find out whether his heart is engaged, and if it is—

Vict. You'll cross your arms, and crown your brow with Willows!

Oliv. No positively, not whilst we have Myrtles. 'Tis but with him that I at present feel my Heart could share all the sacred ties of Marriage, I therefore prefer Julio, as a duty, to all his sex. But, if he is stupid enough to be insensible to me, I shall not for that reason pine and die of silliness! No no, in that case I shall form a new plan, and treat future Lovers with more civility.

Vict. You are the only woman in Love that I ever heard talk reasonably!

Oliv. Come, prepare for the Prado!

Exeunt.

ACT THE THIRD.

Scene I. A long street.

Julio and Garcia enter from the further end of it.

As they come down, Vincentio meets them from the Side.

Vin. Julio, Garcia, congratulate me!—Such an Escape!

Julio. What have you escaped?

Vin. Matrimony!

Gar. Nay then our Congratulations may be mutual —I have had a matrimonial escape too, this very day. Happily the Ladies, though they veil their faces, cannot always veil their Tempers! I was almost on the brink of the Ceremony with the veriest Xantippe!

Vin. Oh, that was not my case—mine was a sweet creature, all life, all Elegance!

Julio. Then, where's the cause of Congratulation?

Vin. Cause—why she's ignorant of Music! prefers a Jigg to a Canzonetta, and—faith whether I ought to believe my own ears startles me—a Jew's-Harp to a Pentachord!

Julio. Jew's-Harp! Poh, prithee.

Gar. Had my Nymph no other fault, I would pardon that, for she is rich and lovely.

Vin. Mine too is rich and lovely, and I'll be sworn

too as ignorant of Scolding as of the Gamut. But—not to know Music!

Julio. Gentle, lovely, and rich,—and ignorant *only* of Music?

Gar. A venial crime indeed! If the sweet creature will marry me, she shall be as regularly followed by a Jew's-Harp in her Train, as a Scotch Signor is said to be by his Player on Bagpipes. I wish you'd give me your Interest.

Vin. Oh, most willingly, if thou hast so tasteless an Inclination. I'll name thee as a dull-soul'd *largo* fellow to her Father—Don Cæsar.

Gar. Cæsar! what Don Cæsar?

Vin. De Zuniga.

Gar. Impossible!

Vin. So much is De Zuniga her Father—that he does not know a Semibreve from a Culverin.

Gar. The Name of the Lady?

Vin. Olivia.

Gar. Why you must be mad—that's my Termagant!

Vin. Termagant! ha! ha! ha! Thou hast certainly some vixen of a Mistress, who infects thy ears towards the whole sex.—Olivia is elegant and timid.

Gar. By Juno, there never existed such a Scold.

Vin. By Orpheus, there never was a gayer temper'd creature. Spirit enough to be charming that's all. If she understood Music—I'd marry her to-morrow.

Julio. Ha! ha! what a ridiculous Jangle! 'Tis evident you speak of two different women.

Gar. I speak of Donna Olivia—Heiress to Don Cæsar de Zuniga.

Vin. I speak of the Heiress of Don Cæsar de Zuniga—her name Donna Olivia.

Gar. Sir, I perceive you mean to insult me!

Vin. Your perceptions are very rapid—but, if you chuse to think so, I'll settle that point Sir with you immediately. But—for fear of Consequences, I'll

fly home, add the last bar to my Concerto—and then meet you where you chuse.

Julio. Poh! this is evidently Misapprehension. To clear the Matter up, I'll visit the Lady, if you'll introduce me Vincentio. But you shall both promise to be governed in this dispute by my decision.

Vin. I'll introduce you with Joy—if you'll persuade her of the charms of Harmony.

Gar. She'll need that—You'll find her all Jar.

Julio. Come, no more Garcia;—thou art but a sort of Male-Vixen thyself.—Melodious Vincentio, when shall I expect you?

Vin. This Evening.

Julio. Not this evening; I have engaged to meet a Goldfinch in a Grove—then, *I* shall have Music, you rogue.

Vin. It never sings in the evening.

Julio. Why then I'll wait 'till morning, and hear it pour out its Matins to the rising sun.—Call on me tomorrow, I'll then attend you to Donna Olivia, and declare, faithfully, the Impression her Character makes on me.—Come Garcia, I must not leave you together, lest his Minums and your Crotchets should fall into a Crash of Discords!

[*Exeunt opposite sides.*

SCENE II.

THE PRADO.

Enter Carlos.

Car. All hail to the powers of Burgundy! Three flasks to my own share.—What sorrows can resist three flasks of Burgundy? This morning I was a mere melancholy fellow, going to shoot myself to get rid of my troubles—Where are my troubles now?—gone to the moon to look for my Wits. And there I hope they'll remain together—if one cannot come back

without the other. But where is this indolent dog, Julio? He fit to receive appointments from Ladies! —Surely I have not missed the hour—No—but Eight yet—(*looking at his Watch*) Eight's the hour by all the Joys of Burgundy! The rogue must be here—let's reconnoitre.

Enter VICTORIA *and* OLIVIA *from the top, veiled.*

Oliv. Positively, mine's a pretty spark, to let me be first at the place of appointment. I have half resolved to go home again, to punish him.

Vict. I'll answer for it that it is *but* half resolved—to fully resolve would be to punish yourself.—There's a solitary man—is not that he?

Oliv. I think not. But if he would please to turn this way—

Vict. That's impossible whilst the load-stone is the other. He is looking at some one in the next walk. Cant you disturb him?

Oliv. (*Screams*) Oh! a frightful frog!

(*Carlos turns.*)

Vict. Heaven! 'tis my Husband.—I cannot speak to him, though my Soul greets him!

Oliv. Ah! what, is that then your truant Knight? —Judging from his Appearance he has more taste and feeling than his conduct gains him credit for. He moves this way.

Car. Pray, Lady, what occasioned that pretty Scream—was it a decoy cry?

Oliv. Decoy! ha! ha! what—for you!

Car. Why not, Madam? one with three flasks of Burgundy in his head, and—his perception—not—over clear! may be worth the chance of decoying.

Oliv. Unless he happens to be already decoyed! 'tis about two years since you was caught I take it. Do keep further off from me good Married Man; perhaps the other Lady will think more favorably of you—than you merit!

Car. Hey-dey! Is it posted up under every Saint in Madrid that I am married?

Oliv. No, you carry the Look about you;—that rueful Phiz could never belong to a Bachelor!

Car. By all the Thorns of matrimony—if—

Oliv. Poor man! how natural to swear by what one feels—Ha! ha!—but why were you in such Haste to encounter them? Bless us! had you but looked about a little, what a market might have been made of that engaging air of your's.

Car. Confound thee, confound thee! If thou art a Wife, may thy husband plague thee with jealousies, and if thou art a maiden—may'st thou be an old one. —(*Going. Meets Julio*) Oh Julio, look not that way —there's a Tongue will stun thee!

Julio. Oh, I greet it—I love female prattle. A Woman's tongue can never scare me!—a female without prattle is like Burgundy without Spirit. From which of these two Goldfinches comes the sweet Music?

Car. (*Taking Victoria's hand*)—This is as silent as a Turtle, only coos now and then—

Pensive as the plaint of Dove
Calling on her absent Love.

perhaps *you* dont hate a Married Man, sweet one?

Vict. Ah! you have guessed right—I love a married man!

Car. Ah, say'st thou so?—wilt thou love me?

Vict. Are you sure you will let me?

Car. Let thee, my Charmer!—how I'll cherish thee for it.—What would I not give for thy Heart!

Vict. I demand a price you cannot give; I ask Love unbounded—but you have a Wife!

Car. Will you assist my Efforts to forget her?

Vict. Will you never love another, and love me ever?

Car. Ever! yes ever, till we find each other dull

company, and yawn, and talk of our Neighbours for Amusement.

Vict. Farewell! I suspect your heart is divided! *(Going.)*

Car. Nay—but move this way; I am fearful of that Wood-pecker at your elbow. Should she begin again, her Noise will scare all the pretty loves that are playing about my heart.

(He Leads her to the back of the Stage.)

Julio. I really believe, though you deny it, that you are the Destiny that fated me hither. See, is not this your Mandate?

(Taking the Letter from his pocket.

Oliv. Oh, delightful! the scrawl of some Chamber-maid, or, perhaps of your Valet, to give you an air. What is the signature—Marriatornes?—Tomasa?

Julio. Since you abuse it, I am convinced the Letter is your's. So you may as well confess.

Oliv. Suppose I should—you cant be sure that I do not deceive you.

Julio. True; but there is one respect in which I will not be deceived; therefore the Preliminary is that you throw off your Veil!

Oliv. My Veil!

Julio. Positively! If you reject this Article, our Negotiation ends.

Oliv. Nay, if you offer Articles, you admit yourself conquered.

Julio. I own myself in danger of capture; but, I have a right to make the best Terms I can. Do you accede to the demand?

Oliv. Certainly not.

Julio. You had better.

Oliv. I protest I will not.

Julio. (*Aside.* My Life upon it I make you!) Why, Madam, how absurd this is—'tis reducing us to the situation of Pyramus and Thisbe talking through a wall. Yet—'tis of no consequence—I know your features as well as though I saw them.

Oliv. How can that be?

Julio. I judge of what you veil, by what I see. I could draw your Picture!

Oliv. Charming! Pray begin the Portrait.

Julio. Imprimis, a broad high Forehead, rounded at the top—like the Arch of an old-fashioned Gateway.

Oliv. Oh, horrid!

Julio. Little grey Eyes, sharp Nose, and Hair—the colour of rusty Prunella.

Oliv. Odious!

Julio. Pale Cheeks, thin Lips and—

Oliv. Hold, hold thou vilifier. (*throws off her veil, he sinks on one knee.*) Yes, yes, kneel, in Contrition for your malicious Slanders.

Julio. Oh no, in adoration!—What a charming creature!

Oliv. Now—for lies on the other side!

Julio. A Forehead formed by the Graces; hair, which Cupid would be stealing for his Bow-strings, were he not engaged, in shooting through those sparkling hazel circlets which nature has given you for Eyes; Lips! 'twere a sin to call them so—they are fragrant rose-leaves.

Oliv. Is that extemporaneous, or ready cut for every woman that takes off her veil?

Julio. It is not absolutely new; Nature, as she finished you, formed the Sentiment in my heart, where it has lain dormant—until you called it into Words.

Oliv. Suppose I were to understand, from all this, that you have a mind to fall in Love with me; wouldn't you at last be finely caught?

Julio. Charmingly caught! if you'll let me understand, at the same time, that you have a mind to fall in love with me.

Oliv. In love with a man! I never loved any thing but a Squirrel!

Julio. Let me be your Squirrel! I'll put on your Chain—and gambol and play for ever around you!

Oliv. But suppose you should have a mind to break the chain?

Julio. Then loosen it; if once that humour seizes me restraint wont banish it. Let me spring and bound at liberty, and, when I return to my lovely rightful owner, tired of all but her, fasten me again to my chain, and kiss me whilst you chide!

Oliv. By way of Reward, I suppose, for playing Truant.

(*Carlos is seen struggling for Victoria's veil in the back ground—she unveils.*)

Julio. Why so silent?

Oliv. I am debating whether to be pleased, or displeased, at what you have said.

Julio. Well?

Oliv. You shall know when I have determined. My friend and your's are approaching this way; she is a woman of honour, and this moment is of the highest Importance to her, they must not be interrupted.

Julio. 'Twould be barbarous—we'll retire as far off as you please.

Oliv. But, we retire separately, Sir. To draw you however from them, you may conduct me hence, on condition that you leave me instantly! [*Exeunt.*

Carlos advances, followed by Victoria.

Car. (*Looking back on her.*)—My Wife!

Vict. I will veil myself again! I will hide my face for ever, if you will now feast my ear with those vows, which a moment since you poured forth so earnestly.

Car. My Wife!—making Love to my own Wife!

Vict. Why should one of the dearest moments of my life be to you so displeasing?

Car. So, I am caught in this snare—by way of pleasing Surprise I suppose.

Vict. Would you could think so.

Car. But, 'tis a surprise fatal to every hope with which you may have flattered yourself.—What, am I to be followed, haunted, watched!

Vict. Not to upbraid you—I followed you but because our Domain, without you, seemed a dreary Desart. It was not to—I never will—upbraid you.

Car. Generous assurance!—Never upbraid me?—I'll take care you never shall!—(*Aside.*—Though she has touched my Soul, I dare not yield to the impression.—Her tenderness is worse than Death to me!)

Vict. Would I could find words to please you!

Car. You cannot; therefore suffer me to go without attempting to follow.

Vict. Is it possible you can be so barbarous?

Car. Do not expostulate; your first vow'd duty is Obedience—that word so grating to your sex.

Vict. To me, it was never grating—to obey has been my Joy; even now I will not dispute your Will, though I feel, for the first time, obedience hateful. (*Going—turns back.*) Oh, Carlos!—my dear Carlos! I go—but my mind rests upon you. [*Exit.*

Car. This is dreadful!—yet, had I not enforced relief from her presence, my perturbation must have destroyed me; for—how could I tell her that I have made her a Beggar! Better she should hate, detest me, than that my tenderness should give vain hopes of felicity—which now she can never taste. Ah! where is now the Bravado with which Wine inspired me?—Distraction return to me again—for Reason presents me nothing but Despair!

Enter Julio.

Julio. Carlos, in the name of all Wonder, who can they be? my charming inflexible little witch was quite inscrutable—I hope your's was more communicative.

Car. Folly! Nonsense! [*Exit.*

Julio. Folly Nonsense—a pretty woman's smile? ha! ha! ha!—it has more Persuasion, and therefore more Reason, than Logic; but these married fellows lose all Taste.—Humph!—suppose my Fair-one should want to bring me into such a state!—she cant have so much tyranny in her disposition. And, yet, if she should? pho! it wont bear thinking about. —If I dare so mad a thing, it must be as cowards fight—without venturing to reflect on the danger.

SCENE III.

AN APARTMENT IN THE HOUSE OF DON VASQUEZ, MARCELLA'S FATHER.

Enter CÆSAR *and* VASQUEZ.

Cæs. Well, Don Vasquez, and—you—then I say —you have a mind that I should marry your Daughter?

Vas. It is sufficient, Signor, that you have signified to us your intention;—my daughter shall prove her Gratitude, in her attention to your Felicity.

Cæs. (*Aside.*—Hem! My Fate, for the remnant of my days, seems at its Crisis!) but just Nineteen you say.

Vas. Exactly, the eleventh of last month.

Cæs. Pity it was not Twenty.

Vas. Why a year can make no great difference, I should think.

Cæs. Oh yes it does, a Year's a great deal; they are so wild at Nineteen.

Vas. Marcella is very grave, and a pretty little fair—

Cæs. Aye, fair, again! Pity she isn't brown or olive. I like your Olives!

Vas. Brown, and olive! you are very whimsical my old friend.

Cæs. Why these fair girls are so stared at by the men; and the young fellows, now-a-days, have a very impudent stare with them! very abashing.

Vas. Come I'll send Marcella to you, and she will—

Cæs. No, no, Stay my good Friend—you are in a violent hurry!

Vas. Why, truly, Signor, at my time of Life I have no time to lose.

Cæs. Why, that's very true—and so——(*Aside.* St. Anthony! this is an anxious moment!—but—there can be no harm in just looking at her—a Look wont bind us for better for worse!)—Well, then, if you have a mind, I say you may let me see her.

[*Exit Vasquez.*

Cæs. (*Puts on his Spectacles.*) Aye, here she comes, I hear her—trip trip trip! I dont like that Step! a Woman should always tread gracefully, with Pride and Dignity, it awes the Men.

Enter VASQUEZ, *leading* MARCELLA.

Vas. There, Marcella, behold your future Husband; and remember, your Attention to him will be the test of your Duty to me! [*Exit.*

Mar. (*Aside.* Ah! how shall I support this Interview!)

Cæs. Somehow, I'm afraid to look round.

Mar. Surely, he does not know that I am here. (*coughs gently.*)

Cæs. So! she knows how to give a hint, I find.

Mar. Signor, what are your Commands for me?

Cæs. Humph!—not non-plus'd at all. (*Looks round*) Oh! that eye, I dont like that eye.

Mar. My Father commanded me—

Cæs. Yes, I know—I know. (*Aside.* Why now I look again, there is a sort of a modest—Oh that Smile! that Smile will never do.)

Mar. I understand, Signor, that you have demanded my hand in Marriage.

Cæs. (*Aside.* Upon my word—plump to the point!) Yes, I did a sort of—I cant say but what I did—

Mar. I am not insensible of the Honour, Sir, but —but—

Cæ. But!—What, dont you like the thoughts of the Match?

Mar. Sir, I ought to. (*Aside.* I dare not say no!)

Cæs. What, perhaps, Child your head is full of Jewels, and Finery and Equipage!

Mar. No indeed, Sir.—Oh pardon me! my situation constrains me to repose in you, that my Heart is secretly pledged to another;—if I obey my Father, and marry you Sir--indeed I shall be most wretched!

Cæs. Say that again!—shall you indeed?

(*pleased.*)

Mar. There is not a Fate I should not prefer—ah! pardon me!

Cæ. Go on, go on—I never was better pleased!

Mar. Pleased at my Reluctance! what may this mean?

Cæs. Never, never better pleased in all my life. So you had really now, you young Baggage, rather have me for a Grand-Father than for a Husband?

Mar. Forgive my Frankness Sir—a thousand times!

Cæs. My dear Girl, let me kiss your hand. You've let me off charmingly. I was frightened out of my wits, lest you should have taken as violent an inclination to the match as your Father.

Mar. Dear Sir!—you charm me now.

Cæs. But hark ye. You'll certainly incur your Father's anger if I dont take the refusal entirely on myself; which I will do, upon condition that you assist me in a little Scheme I have in hand.

Mar. Any thing to show my Gratitude.

Cæs. You must know I cannot prevail upon my Daughter to marry any one. There's nothing on earth will compel her, but the dread of a Mother-in-law. Now, if you will let it appear to her that

you and I are in the regular course to Matrimony—I believe that will do. What say you? shall we be Lovers in play?

Mar. If you are sure it will be only in play.

Cæs. Oh, depend on it. But we must be very fond you know!

Mar. To be sure—ha! ha! exceedingly tender!

Cæs. You must smile upon me now and then cunningly, and let me take your hand when we are sure she sees us.

Mar. Nay, all that cant be necessary.

Cæs. Why I begin to take a fancy to your rogue's face—now I'm in no danger. May'nt we salute once or so, to make the courtship seem regular?

Mar. Never! Such an attempt would make me fly off at once!

Cæs. Well, you must be Lady Governess in this business. I'll go home, and fret Madam about her young Mother-in-law!—By'e Sweeting!

Mar. By'e charmer.

Cæs. Oh, bless its pretty eyes! [*Exit.*

Mar. Bless its pretty Spectacles! ha! ha! ha!—Enter into a league with a cross old Father against a Daughter! why how could he suspect me of such treachery? I could not answer it to my conscience. No, no, I'll write to Donna Olivia and impart the Plot to her, and, as in duty bound—we'll turn our arms against Don Cæsar! [*Exit.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I. DONNA LAURA'S.

Enter LAURA *and* PEDRO.

Lau. Well, Pedro, hast thou seen Don Florio?

Ped. Yes, Donna.

Lau. How did he look when he read my Letter?

Ped. Mortal well, I never spied him looking better, for he'd got on a new cloak, and a—

Lau. Pho, Blockhead! did he look pleased? was it warmly received?

Ped. It seem'd so—it was put into the fire.

Lau. How!

Ped. Yes—but then it was read first;—but when I spoke he started with an air as though he did not know that I was by. Upon that says he, go home and tell Donna Laura I'm coming to her instantly.

(*she waves her hand for him to go.*) [*Exit.*

Lau. So contemptuously destroy the Letter in which my whole Heart overflowed with tenderness? But, why do I question it? has he ever treated me but with the most mortifying Coldness even whilst pretending to be sensible to my charms?—I feel myself on the brink of Hatred. Conscience tells me that my Mind has at length become but a change of Passions—without the intermediate reign of Prin-

ciple or Judgment. By all the Agonies I have felt, should Revenge be once aroused—How idly I talk! he is *here*, and his very voice changes my Will.—But, I dare not meet his eye in this state of Agitation. [*Exit.*

Enter VICTORIA, *in a Spanish Male Dress, preceded by* SANCHA.

Sanc. I will inform my mistress that you are here, Don Florio; I thought she had been in this apartment. [*Exit.*

Vict. Now must I, with a mind torn by Anxieties, once more assume the character of the Lover of my husband's mistress—of the woman who has robbed *me* of his heart, his Children of their Fortune. My task is hard!—Oh Love—*married* Love! assist me. If I can, by any Finesse, obtain from her that fatal Deed—I shall save my little ones from ruin! and then—But I hear her step—(*Pressing her hand on her bosom in agitation*)—There! I have hid my Griefs within my heart; and now, for all the Boldness of an accomplished Cavalier?

Sings an Air, and arranges at the Glass the Feather in her Hat. Dances a few steps, &c. then runs to LAURA *and seizes her hand.*

Vict. My lovely Laura!

Lau. That look speaks Laura loved as well as lovely.

Vict. To be sure! *His* Laura Petrarch immortalized by his Verse, and mine shall be immortal in my Passion.

Lau. Pray how keep you alive this immortal passion during our long absences?

Vict. By thinking of you, and reading your Letters, and—

Lau. My Letters! Pray how often read you them?

Vict. A dozen times an hour! As my lip sips

Chocolate, with my eye I drink each dear line, and place them every night under my pillow.

Lau. Unless you have first—thrown them into the Fire!

Vict. Madam!

Lau. Oh, Florio, what deceit! I know not what enchantment binds me to thee.

Vict. (*Playing carelessly with her Feather.*) Me, my dear, all this to me?

Lau. Yes, Ingrate, thee!

Vict. Positively, Laura, you have these extravagances so often, I wonder my Passion can stand them. It was by these you cured Don Carlos of his love.

Lau. Cured Don Carlos! Oh, Florio! did'st thou but love as he does!

Vict. (*eagerly*) Why, you dont pretend he loves you still, after all your treatment of him?

Lau. Yes most ardently and truly.

Vict. Ah!

Lau. If thou wouldst persuade me that thy passion is real, borrow *his* Words, his Looks;—be a hypocrite one dear moment, and speak to me in all the frenzy of that love which warms the heart of Carlos.

Vict. The heart of Carlos!

Lau. (*Aside.*—Ah! that seemed a jealous pang—it gives my hopes new life!) Yes, Florio, he indeed does love. For me he forsook a beauteous Wife; and *with* me would forsake his Country.

Vic. Ah! is this so!

Lau. Nay, let no jealous feeling distress you thus;—Carlos I despise—he is the weakest of mankind.

Vict. Laura! you *cannot* despise him—Carlos the weakest of mankind! Persuasion springs from his lips, and love, almighty love, is triumphant in his eyes.

Lau. This is strange! you speak of your Rival with the admiration of a Mistress.

Vict. What!—why—it is the fate of Jealousy, as

well as of Love, to see the Charms of its object increased and heightened.—I am jealous—really jealous to distraction of Don Carlos! and cannot in truth taste peace, unless you determine never to see him more. (*Aside.* How nearly had I been betrayed!)

Lau. I vow joyfully never to behold or speak to him again.—When shall we retire dear youth for our Marriage in Portugal? we are not safe here.

Vict. You know I am not rich. (*Observing her with earnestness.*) You must first, you know, sell the Lands my Rival gave you!

Lau. Oh! I have found a purchaser; and tomorrow the transfer will be finished.

Vict. (*Aside.* Ah! then I have now nothing to trust to, but the ingenuity of Gaspar!) There is—perhaps—be not too much alarmed—reason to fear that Don Carlos had no Title to that estate, of which you suppose yourself safely possessed.

Lau. No Title! what can have given you such a suspicion?

Vict. In a conversation between Juan his Steward and me, he agreed to a statement that his master never had an estate in Leon.

Lau. Never! what not by marriage?

Vict. You hear what Juan says.

Lau. Ah! how my frame is chilled! Can I have taken pains to deceive myself—could I believe this, I should be mad!

Vict. These Doubts may soon be annihilated—or confirmed to Certainty.—I have lately seen Don Sancho, the Uncle of Victoria; perhaps you may soon see him in Madrid. You have told me that many years ago he was very much inclined to fall in love with you.

Lau. Oh, to excess; but, I had another object.

Vict. Have you conversed with him much?

Lau. I never saw him nearer than from my Balcony, as he used to ogle me through a Glass sus-

pended by a ribbon like an Order of Knighthood. He is weak enough to fancy it gives him an air of Distinction—ha! ha!—But, where can I find him? I must see him.

Vict. Write him a Billet, I will take care it shall be conveyed.

Lau. Instantly! [*Exit.*

Vict. Base woman! How can I pity thee, or regret the steps which my Duty obliges me to take? Yet, even against such a one as thee, I would not surround myself with the shadows of Deceit merely for myself.—But, for my Children! Is there a Parent's heart that will not pardon me? [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

DON CÆSAR'S.

Enter OLIVIA *and* MINETTE.

Oliv. Well, here we are in private. What is this charming Intelligence of which thou art so full this morning?

Min. Why, Ma'am, as I was in the Balcony that overlooks Don Vasquez's garden, Donna Marcella told me that Don Cæsar had last night been to pay her a visit previous to their marriage, but—

Oliv. Their Marriage! How can you give me the intelligence with such a look of Joy? Their Marriage! 'tis ruin to me.

Min. Dear Ma'am! if you'll but have patience.—She says that Don Cæsar and she are perfectly agreed—

Oliv. Still with that smirking face! I cannot have patience.

Min. Then, Ma'am, if you wont let me tell the story, please to read—here's a Letter from Donna Marcella herself.

Oliv. Why did you not give it me at first—(*reads*)

—Oh! Minette! I give you leave to continue your smirking—listen—" I am more terrified at the idea of becoming your father's Wife, than you are in the expectation of a Mother-in-law; and Don Cæsar would be as loth as either of us. He only means to frighten you into Matrimony, and I have on certain conditions, agreed to assist him; but, whatever you may hear or see, be assured that nothing is so impossible as that he should become the husband of—

Donna Marcella."

Oh delightful Girl! how I love her for this.

Min. Yes Ma'am, and if you'd had patience, I should have told you that they are now in grave debate how to begin the attack which must force you to take shelter with a Husband.

Oliv. Ah, let them amuse themselves in raising batteries, my reserved fire shall tumble them about their ears in the very moment when my poor father is ready to shout his Victory. But—here he comes.

Enter Don Cæsar, *leading* Marcella.

Cæs. (*Apart.* H-r-r-mph! Madam looks very placid —we shall discompose her, or I am mistaken.) So Olivia, here's Donna Marcella come to visit you—though, as matters are, that respect was due from you.

Oliv. I am sensible of the condescension—my dear Madam how very good this is!

(*Taking her hand.*)

Cæs. (*Aside.*—Yes, you'll think yourself wonderfully obliged, when you know all!) Pray, Donna Marcella, what do you think of these Apartments? the furniture and decorations are my Daughter's taste; would you wish them to remain, or will you give Orders to have them changed?

Mar. Changed undoubtedly! of course I shall wish that nobody's taste may govern my apartments but my own.

Cæs. You understand Olivia I suppose, by this time, how every thing is determined upon between Donna Marcella and me.

Oliv. Yes Sir! and I assure you I have great Pleasure in understanding it!

Cæs. Eh! pleasure!

Oliv. Pleasure, Sir!

Cæs. Hey-dey!—aye that wont do—that wont do! —You cant hide it; you are frightened out of your wits at the thoughts of a Mother-in-law, especially a young gay handsome one.

Oliv. Pardon me, Sir, the thought of a Mother-in-law *was* disagreeable, but her being young and gay qualifies it;—we have been very dull—we shall now have Balls, and the most spirited Parties!

Cæs. Eh, eh, eh? what's the meaning of all this? Why, Hussy, dont you know you'll have no apartment but the Garret?

Oliv. 'Tis charming to sleep in an elevated situation; by mending my Health—it will benefit my Complexion!

Cæs. Here! here's an obstinate plague!

Oliv. Bless me Sir, are you angry that I look forward to your Marriage without murmuring?

Cæs. Yes I am—yes I am—you ought to murmur, and you ought to—to—to—

Oliv. Dear me! I find Love, taken up late in life, has a bad effect on the temper—I wish my dear Papa, you had been inspired by Donna Marcella's charms somewhat sooner.

Cæs. You do! you do!—why this must be all put on. This cant be real.

Oliv. Indeed now I protest your engagement with that Lady has given me more pleasure than I have tasted ever since you began to teaze me about a Husband. You seem determined to have a marriage in the family; and I hope now I shall live in quiet with my dear, sweet, young, Mother-in-law.

Cæs. Oh—oh! (*walking about*) Was there ever— Not to care for a Mother-in-law!

Oliv. Surely my Fate is very peculiar; that being pleased with your choice, and submitting with humble Duty to your will, should be the source of offence!

Cæs. Hussy! I dont want you to be pleased with my choice—I dont want you to submit with humble duty to my will. Where I do want you to submit, you rebel—You are—you are—But I'll mortify that wayward Spirit yet!

[*Exit Don Cæsar and Marcella.*

Min. Well truly Don Cæsar is in a piteous passion—he seems more angry at your liking his marriage, than at your refusing to be married yourself. Wouldn't it have been better, Madam, to have affected discontent?

Oliv. To what purpose? but to lay myself open to fresh solicitations to get rid, by my own marriage, of the evil I pretended to dread.—Oh! nothing can be more easy than for my father to be gratified, if he were but lucky enough to chuse the right Lover.

Min. As much as to say, Ma'am, that there is—

Oliv. Why, yes, "as much as to say"—I see you are resolved to have my secret Minette, and so—

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. There is a Gentleman at the door, Madam, called DON JULIO DE MELESSINA. He waits on you from Don Vincentio.

Oliv. Who? Don Julio! it cannot be;—art thou sure of his name?

Serv. The Servant repeated it twice. He is in a splendid carriage, and seems to be a Noble.

Oliv. Conduct him hither. [*Exit, Servant.* (*Aside.* I am astonished! I cannot see him. I would not have him know the Incognita to be Olivia!—There is but one way—) Minette, ask no questions, but do as I order you. Receive Don Julio in my name, pass yourself off for the Heiress of Don Cæsar, and

on no account suffer him to believe that you are not so. (*Turning from her.*) I am amazed and confused! It is impossible that he can have discovered me.—Perhaps, without having recognized me, he too comes with offers to my Father, in the common routine;—then my interview of last night did not give him those Impressions I hoped:—I am jealous of myself! If it is so, his *Incognita* never shall pardon Addresses to—the daughter of Don Cæsar! [*Exit.*

Min. So then! this is some new Lover in whom she is determined to create disgust, and fancies that making *me* pass for her will effect it! Perhaps her wisdom may be *mistaken* though. (*Looking through the door*) Upon my word, a charming man! Oh law, my heart beats with the very Idea of his making Love to me even though he takes me for another.

[*Arranges her Dress.*

Stay, I think he sha'nt find me here; standing in the middle of the room gives one's appearance no Effect. I'll enter upon him with an easy Swim, or an engaging trip, or a something that shall strike—the first Glance is every thing! [*Exit.*

Enter JULIO, *preceded by a* SERVANT, *who retires.*

Julio. Not here! This ridiculous dispute between Garcia and Vincentio must now be determined—it gives me irresistible curiosity!—Though, if she is the character Garcia describes, I expect to be cuff'd for my Impertinence—Here she comes!—a pretty smiling girl, in truth, for a Vixen.

Enter MINETTE, *very affectedly.*

Min. Sir, your most obedient humble Servant. You are Don Julio de Melessina. I am extremely glad to see you, Sir.

Julio. (*Aside.* A very courteous reception!) You honour me infinitely Donna Olivia.—I must apologize for waiting on you without a better Introduc-

tion. Don Vincentio promised to attend me, but a Concert called him to another part of the Town at the moment I prepared to come hither.

Min. A Concert—yes, Sir, he is very fond of Music.

Julio. He is, Madam; and you, I suppose, have a Passion for that charming science?

Min. Oh, yes—I love it mightily.

Julio. (*Aside.* This is lucky!) But, I think I have heard, Donna Olivia, that your taste that way is peculiar—you are fond of a (*Aside.* I can hardly speak it!)—of a—Jew's Harp. (*Smothering a Laugh.*)

Min. A Jew's-Harp! Mercy! What, do you think a person of my Birth and Figure can have such fancies as that? No, Sir, I love Fiddles, French-horns, Tabors, and all the chearful noisy instruments in the world.

Julio. (*Aside.* Vincentio must have been mad; and I as mad as he to mention it.) Then, you are fond of Concerts, Madam?

Min. Doat on 'em! (*Aside.* I wish he'd offer me a Ticket!)

Julio. (*Aside.*) Vincentio, is clearly wrong. Now, to prove how far the other was right in supposing her a Vixen.

Min. There is a Grand Public Concert, Sir, to be tomorrow. Pray do you go?

Julio. I believe I shall have that pleasure, Madam.

Min. My Father, Don Cæsar, wont let me purchase a Ticket. I think its very hard.

Julio. (*Aside.* Oh, now for it!) Pardon me, I think it perfectly right.

Min. Right! what to refuse me a trifling expence that would procure me a great pleasure?

Julio. Yes, doubtless. Ladies are too fond of Dissipation. I think Don Cæsar a pattern for Fathers.

Min. Law, Sir, you'd think it very hard, if you

were me, to be locked up all your life, and know nothing of the world but what you could catch through the bars of your balcony.

Julio. Perhaps I might. But, as a Man, I am convinced 'tis right; Daughters and Wives should be equally excluded from the destructive haunts of dissipation Let them keep to their Embroidery, nor ever presume to show their faces but at their own fire sides. (*Aside.* This will bring out the Xantippe, surely!)

Min. Well, Sir, I dont know—to be sure Home, as you say, is the fittest place for Women; for my part, I could live for ever at Home if I was married. (*Aside.* I am determined he shall have his own way; who knows what may happen!)

Julio. (*Aside.* By all the powers of Caprice, Garcia is as wrong as the other!)

Min. I delight in nothing so much as in sitting by my Father, and hearing his tales of Old Times—and I fancy, when I have a Husband, I shall be quite as happy to sit and listen to his stories of present times.

Julio. Perhaps your husband, fair lady, might not be inclined to while time away with you. Men have a thousand avocations that call them abroad, and probably your chief amusement would be counting the hours of his absence, and giving a tear to each as it passed.

Min. Well, he should never see them, however. I would always smile when *he* entered, and, if he found my eyes red, I'd say I'd been weeping over the history of the unfortunate Damsel, whose true-love hung himself at sea, and appeared to her afterwards in a jacket covered with salt sea-water.—(*Aside.* Surely this will catch him!)

Julio. I am every moment more astonished! Pray, Madam, permit me a Question—Are you really—yet I cannot doubt it—are you really Donna Olivia, the daughter of Don Cæsar, to whom Don Garcia

and Don Vincentio, had lately the honour of paying their addresses?

Min. Am I Donna Olivia!—ah! ah! ah! what a Question! Pray, Sir, is this my Father's house? are you Don Julio?

Julio. I beg your pardon; but, to confess, I had heard you described—as a lady who had not quite so much Sweetness, and—

Min. Oh, what you had heard that I was a Termagant I suppose.—'Tis all Slander, Sir!—There is not in Madrid, though I say it, a sweeter Temper than my own; and, though I have refused a good many Lovers, yet, if one was to offer that I could like—

Julio. You would take Pity, and reward his passion. Lovely Donna Olivia, how enchanting is this frankness! (*Aside.* 'Tis a little odd though!)

Min. Why I believe I should take pity; for it always seemed to me to be a very hard-hearted thing, cruelly to refuse to accept a Lover that one likes.

Julio. (*Aside.* What Enigma is all this! is this Garcia's sour fruit?)

Cæsar. (*Without*) Olivia! Olivia!

Min. Bless me, I hear Don Cæsar! Now, Sir, I have a peculiar Fancy that you should not tell him, in this first visit, your design.

Julio. Madam! my design! [*They rise.*

Min. Yes, that you will not speak out, till we have had a little further conversation, of which I'll take care to give you an opportunity very soon.—He'll be here in a moment; now pray Don Julio go; if he should meet you, and ask you who you are, you can say that you are—you may say that you came on a visit to his Daughter's Maid you know! [*Exit.*

Julio. (*Aloud.*) I thank you Madam—(*Aside.* for your Departure!) I never was in such Peril in my life.—I believe she has a Licence in her pocket, a Priest in her closet, and the Ceremony by heart!

[*Exit.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I. AN APARTMENT IN THE HOUSE OF DON CARLOS.

CARLOS, *discovered writing.*

Car. (*Tearing paper, and rising.*) It is in vain! Language cannot furnish me with terms to soften to Victoria the ruinous transaction! Could she see the compunctions of my soul, her gentle heart would pity me!—But what then?—she is ruined! my Children are undone! Ah! the Artifices of a base woman, and my villainy to a most amiable one, have made me unfit to live—I am a wretch that ought to be driven from Society.

Enter PEDRO, *hastily.*

Ped. Sir, Sir!

Car. Well!

Ped. Sir, I have just met Don Florio; he asked if my mistress was at home, so I surmise he is going to our house; and so I ran to let you know—for I love to keep my word!—Though I think some mischief will follow!

Car. You have done well. Go home, wait for me at the door, and admit me without noise. [*Exit Pedro.*] At least I shall have the pleasure of Revenge! I'll punish her by sacrificing her paramour before her face—and then—what sickening prospect then! [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

DONNA LAURA'S.

Enter LAURA *with precipitation, followed by* VICTORIA.

Lau. 'Tis Don Sancho's Carriage!—How succesful was my Letter! This, my Florio, is a most important moment.

Vict. It is indeed! and I will leave you, to secure the result of it. If I am present, I must witness conduct in you that I shall not be able to endure, though I know it to be but affected—(*Aside.* Now Gaspar, play thy part well, and save Victoria!)

Lau. This tender Jealousy is grateful to me! Stay without in the Saloon. [*Exit* VICTORIA.] Here comes the Dotard!

Enter GASPAR, *dressed as an Old Beau.*

Two Servants follow, and take off a rich Cloak.

Gasp. Take my cloak; and, d'ye hear Ricardo, go home and bring the eider-down cushions for the Coach, and tell the fellow not to hurry me *post* through the streets of Madrid. I have been jolted from side to side like a Pippin in a Mill-stream! Drive a man, of my Rank, as he would a city vintner and his fat wife going to a Bull-fight!——Aye, there she is! (*looking through a Glass suspended by a Ribbon*)—there she is! Charming Donna Laura, let me thus at the shrine of your beauty—(*makes an effort to kneel, and falls on his face; Laura assists him in rising*)—Fie, fie, these new shoes! they have made me skate all day like a Dutchman on a canal; and now—well you see how profound my adoration is

Madam—When common lovers would but kneel, I was prostrate.

Lau. You do me infinite honour. (*Aside.* Disgusting Wretch!)

Gasp. But, how could you be so barbarous; to leave me at Valencia, without granting me one interview nearer than your Balcony!

Lau. Ah! you dont understand woman's artifice! I knew you would follow; and, could I resist the triumph of shewing that I led in my train the illustrious Don Sancho?

Gasp Oh, you dear, charming—But stay—(*searching his Pockets*) Bless me, what a careless fellow I am! I had a Casket with some Diamonds in it—a Necklace, and a few trifles which I meant to have had the honour to—Left it at home—Oh, my giddy pate!

Lau. You are always elegant I have no doubt Don Sancho—I'll send my Servant—Pedro! [*calling.*

Gasp. No, no, tomorrow. It will be an excuse for me to come tomorrow.

Lau. My wishes might be your excuse; but, tomorrow be it then. You look thinner to me now than when I saw you from my window, Don Sancho. —I protest, now I observe you, you are much altered.

Gasp. Aye, Madam—Fretting! Your absence raised rather a fever that lowered my bloom. You see, I begin to look almost a middle aged man, now.

Lau. No really; far from it, I assure you! (*Aside.* The Fop is as wrinkled as a baboon.)

Gasp. My health was disturbed too by a strange report, that Victoria's husband Don Carlos was my Rival. If this has been, I take my leave—My blade will hardly keep in its scabbard when I think of him.

Lau. Think no more of him. I merely permitted him to have hopes of favour, until I had preserved what would have been squander'd on others. I wonder you gave your Niece to him with such a Fortune!

Gasp. Gave! Donna Victoria gave herself; and as to Fortune, she had not a Pistole from me.

Lau. 'Twas indeed unnecessary, with so fine an Estate as she had in Leon.

Gasp. My Niece an Estate in Leon! Not enough to give shelter to a field mouse; and, if he has told you so, he is a Braggart.

Lau. Told me so—I have the Writings; he has made over the lands to me.

Gasp. Made over the lands to you—Oh a deceiver! Ah! here's a plot. Pray, let me see this extraordinary Deed—(*She runs to a Cabinet*) a plot, I'll be sworn.

Lau. Here is the Deed which made that Estate mine for ever—No, Sir, I will intrust it in no hand but my own—Yet look over me, and read the description of the Lands.

Gasp. (*Reading through his Glass.*) H-r-r-r "in the vicinage of Rosalva, bounded on the West by the river—h-r-r-r—on the East by the forest" Oh, treacherous dog! I need read no further; I see how the thing is.

Lau. How, Sir!—but hold.—Stay a moment—I am breathless with fear.

Gasp. Nay, Madam, dont be afraid! The estate is not his—that's all;—he pretend the Castle is his! the very Castle where his Uncle was born! and which I never did, nor ever will, bestow on any Don in the two Castiles.—Contriving rogue! Bribe you with a title to that estate—ha! ha!

Lau. Vengeance follow him! The villain I employed must have been *his* creature—his reluctance all Art—his anxiety to get the deeds into his hands again must have been but from a wish to cancel the proofs of his fraud.

Gasp. Could you suppose I'd give Carlos such an estate for running away with Victoria? No, no, the Vineyards, and the Corn fields, and the Woods of Rosalva are not his.—I've somebody else in my eye

—in my eye, observe me—to give *my* Right in them to—cant you guess who it is?—(*Looks through his Glass.*)

Lau. No, indeed!—(*Aside.* He gives me a glimmering that saves me from Despair!)

Gasp. I wont tell you, unless you'll bride me. I wont indeed (*kisses her cheek*) There, now I'll tell you—All my estate shall be your's.—*I'll* give you Deeds—I am uneasy that you possess the others! The sooner you get rid of fictitious titles the better—they are dangerous!

Lau. Can you be serious?

Gasp. I'll sign and seal within an hour if you require it. (*Seats himself.*)

Lau. Noble Don Sancho!—Thus then I annihilate the proof of his Perfidy, and of my Weakness! Thus, I tear to Atoms his detested name—(*destroys the Deeds*)—and as I tread on these—so would I on his Heart!

VICTORIA. (*Rushing in.*)

Vict. Transporting moment! my Children then are saved!

Lau. (*Apart.*) Oh, Florio, 'tis as thou said'st—Carlos was a villain and deluded me. Ah! why this strange air?- - -I see the cause!—you think me ruin'd—thou wouldst abandon me! I perceive it by thy averted face—thou darest not meet my eyes—If I misjudge thee, speak!

Vict. I cannot. You little guess the Emotions of my heart—Heaven knows I pity you!

Lau. Pity! Villain--and has thy Love already sunk to Pity!

CARLOS (*without.*)

Car. Stand off, quit your weak hold. I am come for Vengeance!— [*Enters, his sword drawn.*] where

is this youth? where is this blooming rival? Hold me not base woman!—(*Victoria retires to the back of the Stage*) in vain the stripling flies me, for my sword shall within his bosom—atchieve my revenge!

Vict. (*Advancing takes off her hat, and drops on her knee.*) Strike, strike here! Plunge it deep into that bosom already pained by a hundred wounds keener than your sword can give;—for there is the corroding anguish of Love betrayed, there are felt the pangs of disappointed hope—hope sanctified by holiest Vows written in the book of Heaven!—Ah! he sinks!—(*He seems faint, she springs towards him*) —Oh! my Carlos! My beloved! my Husband!—forgive my too severe reproaches—thou art dear, yet dear as ever, to Victoria's heart!

Car. You know not what you do—or what you are! Oh, Victoria, you are now—a beggar!

Vict. No, we are rich, we are happy! See there the fragments of that fatal Deed; had that not been cancelled, we had indeed been undone, yet still not wretched—could my Carlos think so!

Car. The fragments of the Deed! the Deed which that base woman—

Vict. Speak not so harshly.—Madam, notwithstanding my Duties as Wife and Mother, I am uneasy at having practiced Artifice, and will make you amends.—Be not afraid of poverty; a Woman has deceived, but she will hope your reform, and will not desert you!

Lau. Is all this real? Can I be awake!

Vict. May'st thou indeed awake to Virtue! You have talents; be no longer unworthy of such precious gifts, by exerting them but to atchieve dishonour. Virtue is our first, our awful Duty; bow, Laura, bow to her dictates, and deeply mourn that you e'er forgot her heaven-sent precepts.

Lau. And so! by a smooth speech on Virtue, you

think to drive from my memory the Injuries I sustain! —Thou know'st not to appreciate my mind! Love is less sweet to my heart than Revenge!—and, if there is a Law in Spain to gratify that passion, your *Virtue* shall have another field for exercise. [*Exit.*

Gasp. (*Calls after her*) You'll find no help in the Law of Spain—Charmer!

Car. My hated rival—and my charming Wife!—how many sweet Mysteries have you to unfold. Oh Victoria! my soul thanks thee; but I dare not yet say I love, 'till acts of watchful tenderness have proved how deeply the sentiment is engraved in my heart.

Vict. Can it be true that I have been unhappy? But the Mysteries, my Carlos, are already explained to you—Gaspar's resemblance to my Uncle—

Gasp. Yes, Sir, I was always apt at resemblances. In our plays at home I am always Queen Cleopatra—you know she was but a Gypsy Queen, and I hit her off to a nicety.

Car. My Victoria! To gaze on thee, to love, and to listen to thee, seems a foretaste of the bliss of repentent sinners—to whom cheering angels minister! [*Exit with Victoria.*

Gasp. Their wits help 'em—how easily are Women taken in!—Here's a wild rogue has plagued her heart these two years; and a whip syllabub about ministering Angels clears scores! 'Tis a pity that a little masculine mental strength—though now I think on't, the number of such *gentle* Fair-ones is not over large! —if it were at all lessened—the mind masculine would be nearly universal!

[*Exit.*

SCENE III.

THE PRADO.

Enter MINETTE, *in a Mantle.*

Min. Ah! after I have been sauntering in sight of his lodgings these two hours, here comes the man at last. Now, if my Scheme takes, how happy shall I be! Surely, as I was Donna Olivia before, to please my Lady, I may be Donna Olivia now, to please myself. I'll address him as the maid of a Lady who wishes to try his heart—convey him to our house—then retire, come in again, and, with vast Confusion, confess my tenderness, and that I sent my Servant. If he should dislike my forwardness, the censure will fall on my Lady's character; if he should be pleased, the advantage will be mine. But, perhaps he is here on some frolic or other—I'll watch him at a distance before I speak. [*Exit.*

Enter JULIO.

Julio. —Not here! though she gave me last night but a faint refusal, which I had a right, by all the rules of gallantry, to construe into Assent!—then she's a jilt. Hang her, I feel I am uneasy! The first woman that ever gave me pain. I feel with shame that this spot has attractions for me because it was here, I conversed with her. 'Twas here the attractive Syren, conscious of her Charms, unveiled her fascinating face. 'Twas here—

Enter GARCIA *and* VINCENTIO.

Vin. '*Twas here*—that Julio, leaving Champaigne

untasted, and Songs unheard, came to talk to the whistling branches!

Gar. 'Twas here—that Julio, flying from the young and the gay, was found in doleful meditation—on Love for a hundred ducats!

Vin. Who is she?

Julio. Not Donna Olivia Gentlemen—not Donna Olivia!

Vin. We have been seeking you, to ask—without listeners—the event of your visit to her.

Julio. The event has proved that you have been most grossly duped.

Gar. I knew that—ha! ha! ha!

Julio. And you likewise—ha! ha! ha!—The fair lady, so far from being a Vixen, is the very Essence of Gentleness. To me, so much Sweetness in a wife—would be downright maukish. I like the little Poignancies which flow from quick Spirits and a consciousness of Power!—one may as well marry a looking glass, as a woman who constantly reflects back one's own sentiments and whims.

Vin. Well, but what say you to an ear—that can listen to a Jew's-harp!

Julio. Detests it; it would as soon listen to a Jew.

Gar. Poh, poh! this is a game at Cross-purposes; let us all go to Don Cæsar's together, and settle opinions on the spot.

Julio. I shall go then with a Grace—as the only man of the Sett not imposed upon!

(*All going, arm in arm.*)

Enter MINETTE, *veil'd.*

Min. Gentlemen, my Lady has sent me for one of you; pray which is it?

Julio. (*Returning*) Me, without doubt, child.

Vin. I dont know that yet.

Gar. Look at me, my dear, dont you think I am the man?

Min. (*To Garcia*) Let me see—a good air, and well formed, you are the man for a Dancer. (*To Vincentio*) Well dressed, and nicely made up—you are the man for a bandbox. (*To Julio*) Handsome spirited and graceful—you are the man for my Lady.

Julio. My dear little Iris—here's all the Gold in my pocket.—Gentlemen, your most obedient—humble—(*stalking by them, with his arm round Minette.*)

Gar. Pho, prithee, dont be a fool. Are you not going to Donna Olivia?

Julio. Donna Olivia must wait, my dear boy; we can decide upon her tomorrow. Come along, my little dove of Venus! [*Exit.*

Gar. What a rash fellow it is! Ten to one but he'll be robbed and murdered;—they take him for a Stranger.

Vin. Let's follow, and see where she leads him.

Gar. That's hardly fair; however, as there seems to be Danger, we'll venture! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

AN APARTMENT AT DON CÆSAR'S.

Enter OLIVIA, *and* SERVANT.

Oliv. Bring my veil, and follow me to the Prado. (*Exit Servant.*) Julio will certainly be there; his knowledge of the world ensures that he is too well acquainted with the facility with which Spanish manners admit of a Veiled adventure, not to translate my denial into assent;—at least I must convince myself. If I see him compleatly vanquished, I can drop a chance card with my Name, and my Father hears of him of course tomorrow. [*Exit.*

Enter MINETTE *and* JULIO.

Min. There Sir—please to sit down 'till my Lady is ready to wait on you—she wont be long. (*Aside.* —I'm sure she's out, and I may effect much before she returns.) [*Exit.*

Julio. Now, what species of adventure am I likely to have? Is it some young Miss who takes advantage of the Sanction of which the freedom of our Duenna adventures admits, to let me know I may ask her Papa?—or some different species of female, grown bold in her Guilt?—Through fifty back Lanes, a long Garden, and a narrow stair-case, into a superb apartment—all that's in the regular way.—One adventure is sadly like another! most probably presently in comes a stately dame with a Veil on, tells me she fears I have but a slight opinion of her virtue, I make her an answer about her Beauty, and, after a dozen or two of entreaties and denials off comes the veil—a fat Dame perhaps of Forty! The Freedoms of life produce but a maukish sort of life, that's the truth on't; if enlivened, it is but by being obliged to leap from a window, or crawl like a cat along the Gutters!—Ah, ah! but this promises Novelty—(*looking through the door*) a young girl and an old man—wife or daughter?—they are coming this way.—My lovely *Incognita* by all that's propitious! Why did not some kind Spirit whisper to me my happiness! but hold—she cant mean to treat the old Gentleman with a sight of me! (*Goes behind the Sofa.*)

Enter CÆSAR *and* OLIVIA.

Cæs. No no Madam, no going out!—give me the Veil;—that will be useless till you put it on for Life! There Madam, this is your Apartment, your House, your Garden, your Assembly, till you go to your Convent! Why, how impudent you are to look thus unconcerned—hardly forbearing to laugh in my face!

—Very well—very well! (*Exit, double locking the door.*)

Oliv. Ha, ha, ha! I'll be even with you my dear father, though you treble lock it. I'll stay here two days, without once asking for my Liberty, and you'll come the third, with tears in your eyes, to take me out. He has forgot that door leading to the garden—but I vow I'll stay; (*sitting down on the Sopha*) I can make the time pass pleasantly enough.

Julio. I hope so! (*Looking over the back of the Sopha.*)

Oliv. (*Screams.*) How is this? I am all amazement!

Julio. My dear creature, why are you so alarmed?—am I here before you expected me?

(*Coming round.*)

Oliv. Expected you!

Julio. Oh, this pretty Surprise! Come, let us sit down—your Father was very obliging to lock us in together.

Oliv. (*Calling at the door*) Sir! Sir! my Father!

Cæs. (*Without*) Aye, 'tis all in vain—I wont come near you. There you are, and there you may stay. Make as much Noise as you will, I shan't return.

Julio. Why are you not ashamed, that your Father has so much more consideration for your Guest than you have!

Oliv. My Guest! (*Aside.* How is it possible he can have come hither!)

Julio. Pho! this is carrying Reserve further than is useful—if there were a third person here it might be prudent.

Oliv. Why this Assurance, Don Julio, is really—

Julio. The thing in the world you are the most ready to pardon.

Oliv. Upon my word, I dont know how to treat you.

Julio. Consult your Heart.

Oliv. I shall consult Delicacy and Reserve.

Julio. Very pretty words; but really, when spoken with that very grave face, after having sent your Maid to bring me hither, they are rather more than I expected. I shall be in an ill humour presently—I wont stay if you treat me thus!

Oliv. Well, this exceeds all preceding Impudence! I have heard that men will, privately to each other, slander women, but to utter it to one's face!—I sent for you, did I!

Julio. Ha! ha! ha! Well, if it obliges you, I will fancy that you did not send for me, that your Maid did not conduct me hither, nay, that I have not now the supreme happiness—(*catching her in his Arms.*)

Enter MINETTE, *re-dressed, screams, and runs out.*

Julio. Donna Olivia de Zuniga!—by what Enchantment came she here?

Oliv. (*Aside.* That's lucky!) Olivia, my dear friend, why do you run away?

MINETTE *re-enters.*

(*Apart to her.*) Keep the Character I charge you. Be still Olivia!

Min. Oh! dear Madam, I was—I was so frighten'd when I saw that Gentleman.

Oliv. Oh, my dear, it is the merriest kind of Gentleman in the world—he pretends that I sent my Maid for him- -ha! ha!

Julio. Aye, always tell a thing your own way, if you wish it not to be believed.

Min. It is an ingenious pretence, under which to intrude on a Lady, however! (*Aside.*—It must not be discovered that I know any thing of the matter!)

Oliv. Now I think it a miserably poor one; he has certainly not had occasion to invent reasons for such Impertinences often. (*Apart.* Tell me that he has made love to you, to day!)

Min. I fancy he *has* had occasion to excuse impertinences very often;—his impertinence to me to day—

Julio. To you Madam?

Min. Making Love to me, my dear, all the morning;—could hardly get him away when Don Cæsar was coming in, he was so very desirous to speak to him for me.—Nay, Sir, I dont care for your inpatience.

Oliv. Nay, then, this accidental meeting is fortunate. Pray, Don Julio, dont let my presence prevent your conversing about any marriage settlements you intend to offer to my friend—I should leave you together?

Julio. (*Apart.*) To contradict a Lady on such an assertion would be too gross; but, upon my honour, Donna Olivia is the last woman upon earth who could inspire me with a tender thought! Find an excuse to send her away, my Angel, I entreat you. I have a thousand things to say, and the moments are too precious to be given to her.

Oliv. One can't be rude, you know! Come, my dear, sit down. (*Seating herself*) Have you brought your work? [*They sit.*

Julio. Distraction! what can she mean? (*placing himself between them.*) Donna Olivia, I am sorry to be obliged to inform you that my Physician has just been sent for to your Father Don Cæsar—The poor Gentleman is seized with a Vertigo.

Oliv. Vertigo! Oh, dont go, he has one frequently you know.

Min. Yes, and he always then drives me from his sight!

Julio. Really, Madam, I cannot comprehend—

Cæs. (*Without*) It is impossible—impossible, Gentlemen! Don Julio, cannot be here.—[*unlocks the door.*

Julio. Ah! who's that?

Enter Cæsar, Garcia, *and* Vincentio.

Gar. There! did we not tell you so? We saw him enter a Garden with which we were unacquainted, and led, with an alarming mystery, by one unknown to us and veiled.

(*Olivia looks at Minette.*)

Cæs. What can be the meaning of all this? a Man in my Daughter's apartment! (*Attempts to draw.*)

Gar. (*Prevents him.*) Hold Sir! Don Julio is of the first rank in Spain, and will unquestionably be able to satisfy your Honour, without troubling your Sword.—(*Apart.* We have done mischief Vincentio!)

Julio. (*To Olivia.*) They have been unaccountably impertinent! but never fear, I'll bring you off by pretending a Passion for your busy Friend there!

Cæs. Satisfy me in a moment! speak one of you.

Julio. I came here, Sir, by some accident. The Garden door was open, and—I can hardly tell how I was led to this Apartment—I knew not it was your Daughter's. You came in a moment after, and, very civilly, lock'd me in with this Lady!

Cæs. Lock'd you in! why then did you not, like a Man of Honour, cry out?

Julio. The Lady cried out, Sir, and you refused to relieve her. But, when Donna Olivia de Zuniga entered—for whom I have conceived a most serious Passion—

Cæs. A Passion for her! You may as well entertain a passion for domesticating an untameable Hyæna! I'll hear ot no more Addresses to her.

Gar. There Vincentio! what think you now? Xantippe, or not!

Vin. I am afraid you are right—but so am I! Pray Don Cæsar satisfy Garcia—has not the Lady a fond passion for the tone of—a—particular species of —Harp?

Cæs. Fond! She's fond of nothing but playing the Vixen, there is not another such Fury upon earth!

Julio. (*Aside.* All these are odd Liberties though, with a person that doesn't belong to him!)

Cæs. I'll play the Hypocrite to get her off no more; the World shall know her true Character, they shall know—but, ask her Maid there!

(*Pointing to Minette.*)

Julio. Her Maid!

Min. Why—yes—Sir, to say Truth, after all—I am but Donna Olivia's Maid!

Oliv. (*Apart.* Dear Minette! speak for me, or I am ruined!)

Min. I will Madam! I must confess Sir (*going up to Julio.*) there never was so bitter a temper'd creature as my Lady is. I have borne her tempers for two years—(*Olivia pulls her sleeve*)—I will, I will! (*to Olivia.*) and this I am sure of, that if you marry her, you'll rue the day every hour the first month, and hang yourself the next!—(*Aside.* I have done it roundly now!) [*Exit.*

Oliv. (*Aside.* I am caught in my own Snare!)

Cæs. After this true character of my Daughter, I suppose Signor we shall hear no more of your Vows; so let us depart, and leave Madam to begin her Penance! (*Going.*)

Julio. My ideas are in the utmost Chaos! My *Incognita*—Donna Olivia de Zuniga—and the person I took for you, your Maid! something too flattering darts across my mind!

Cæs. Oh, if you have any Marriage Settlements to propose to her Maid, I have nothing further to say; but as to that violent creature—

Julio. Oh! do not profane her thus! Where is that boisterous Spirit you tell me of? Is it that which speaks in those conscious blushes on her cheeks? is it that which bends her lovely eyes to Earth?

Cæs. Aye, they are only bent on how to afflict me

with some new Obstinacy—she'll break out in some new character in a moment.

Julio. It cannot be—*are* you, enchanting Being, such a creature?

Oliv. To all men—but one. (*Looking down.*)

Julio. But one! Oh, might that excepted one be me!

Oliv. Would you not fear to trust your fate, with her you have cause to think so hateful?

Julio. No, I should hold in grateful remembrance the hour that made my fate and her's one. Permit me, Sir, to pay my vows to this fair Vixen?

Cæs. Are you so bold a man! But, if you are, 'twill be only lost time. She'll contrive, some way or other, to return your vows upon your hands.

Oliv. If they have your Sanction Sir, I will return them—only with my own.

Cæs. What's that! what did she say? my skull is giddy with Surprise!

Julio. And mine with rapture!

(*Catching her hand.*)

Cæs. Dont make a Fool of me, Olivia.—Wilt marry him?

Oliv. If you command me, Sir!

Cæs. My dear Don Julio thou art my guardian angel!—Shall I have a Son-in-Law at last? Garcia, Vincentio, could either of you have foreseen this?

Gar. Sir, if we had, we should have saved that Lady much trouble; 'tis pretty clear now, *why* she was a Vixen.

Vin. Yes, yes, all is clear enough. I beg your pardon, Madam, for the share of trouble I gave you. The only favor I have now to ask is that you will tell me your sincere Opinion of the Science to which I am devoted?

Oliv. I love Music, Don Vincentio, I admire your Skill, and you will delight me when you give me a Concert!

Vin. Marrying me would have enchanted me less! I am satisfied with a union in *Taste*—and congratulate Julio.

Enter CARLOS *and* VICTORIA.

Oliv. Ah!—here comes Victoria and her Carlos.—My friend, you are happy—'tis in your looks, we need not ask the event.

Cæs. Don Carlos, you come in a happy hour!

Car. I do indeed, for I am most happy.

Julio. Why Carlos! what has made thee thus since morning?

Car. A Wife! Marry, Julio, marry!

Julio. This Advice from *you?*

Car. Yes, and when you have married an Angel, when that angel shall have done for you so much, as to make your Gratitude almost equal to your Love, you may then guess something of what I feel in calling this angel mine.

Oliv. So, Don Julio, I suppose if I should bestow on you the honour of my hand, you will, on this hint, behave with cruelty, that I, like my exemplary Cousin—

Vict. Hold, Olivia! It is not necessary that a Husband should be faulty to make a Wife's character exemplary;—your gratitude displayed for his tender watchfulness will give you sufficient Graces, whilst the purity of your Manners, and the nice Honour of your life, will gain you applause—where Approbation is Fame.

Oliv. Pretty and matronly! thank you my Dear! We have each made a bold hit to day; your's has been to reclaim a Husband, mine to gain one.—Shall we venture now to make a bold claim—on the Approbation of our Judges!

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

T. DAVISON, Lombard street,
Whitefriars, London